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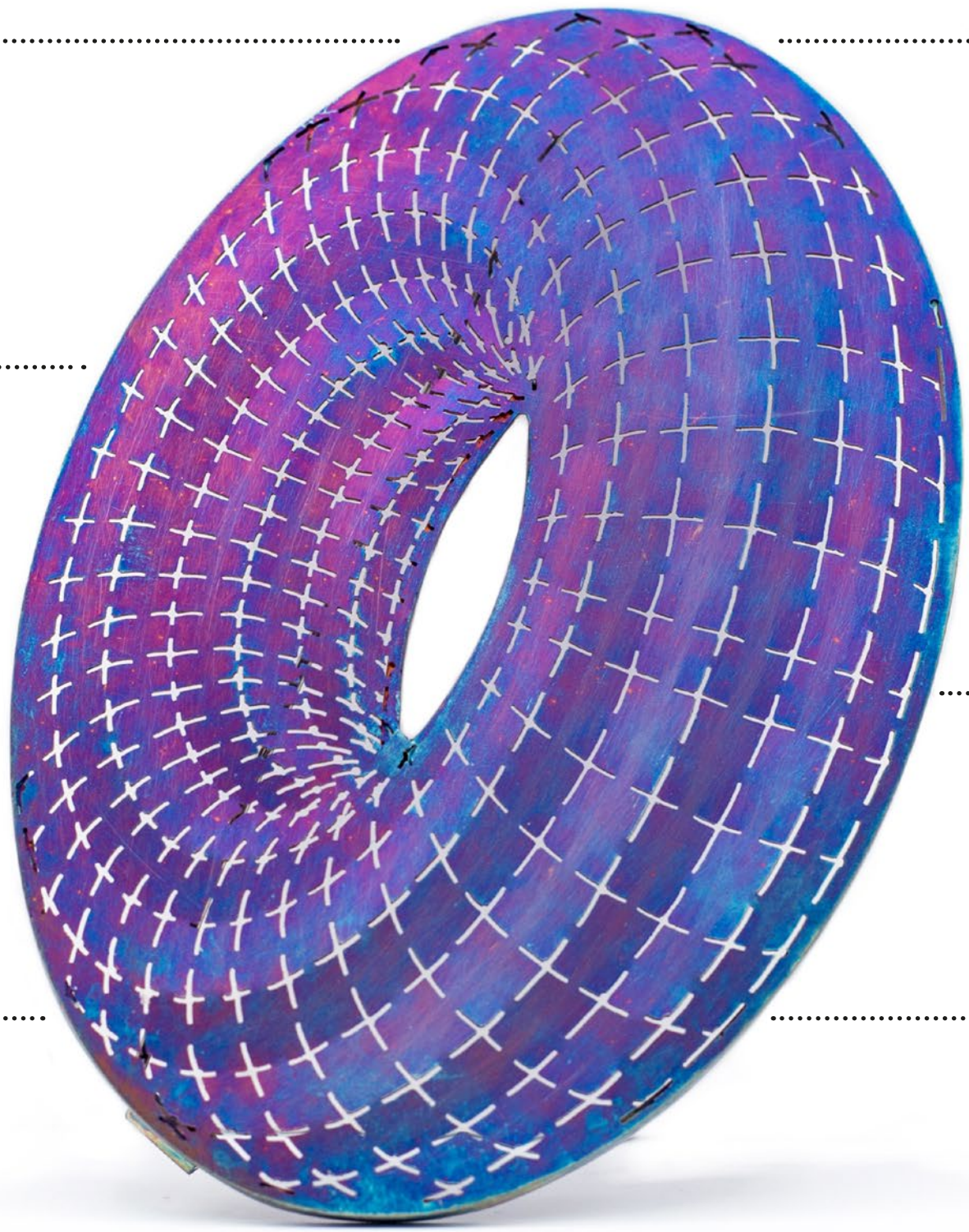

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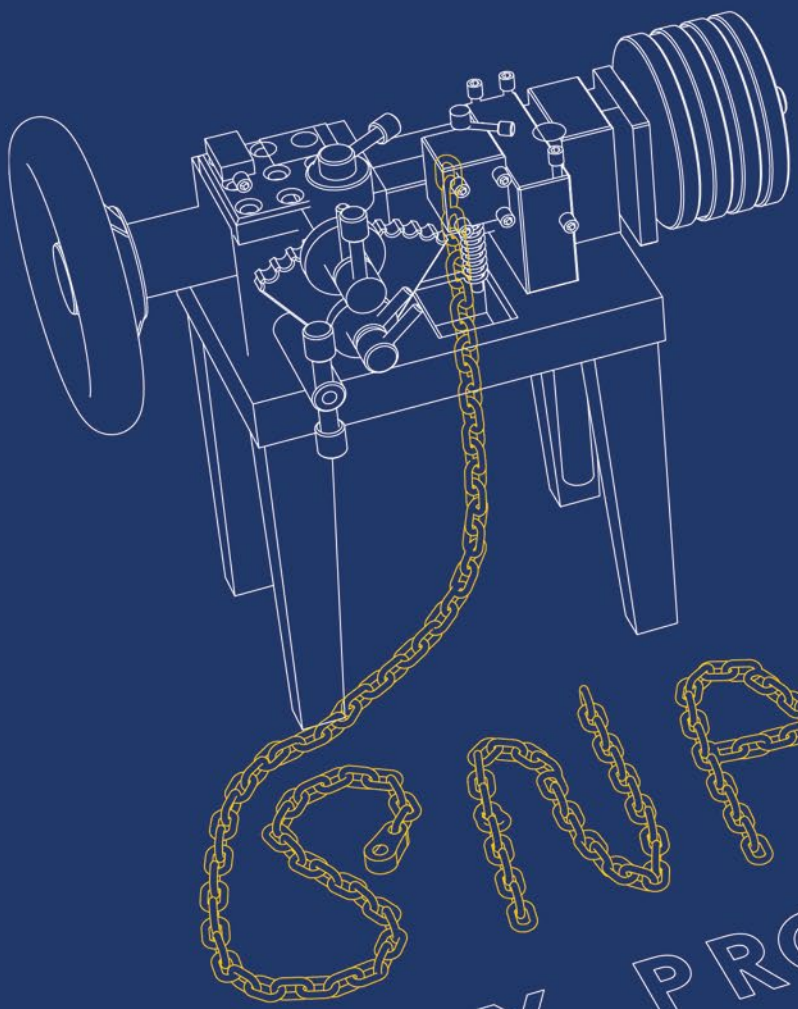

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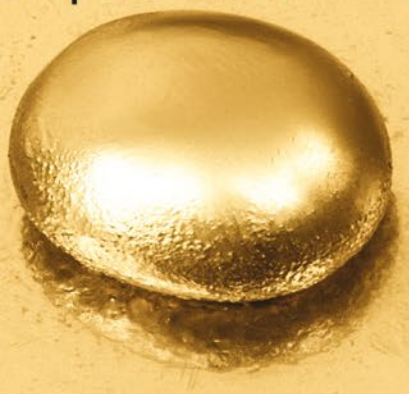

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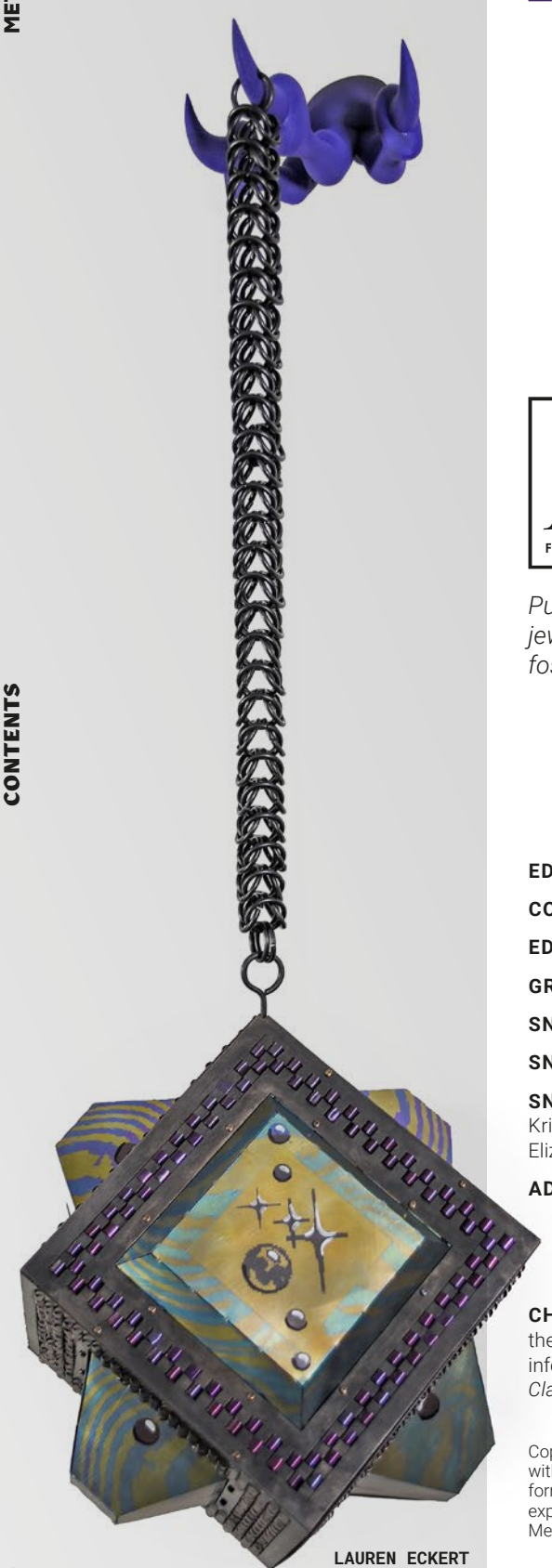

LAUREN ECKERT
SEE PAGE 55

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ON THE COVER Xinia Guan: *Flatland II* (brooch), 2020. See p43.

In the 19th century, "worldbuilding" was geological jargon but by the 20th century the term's common usage referred to the process of constructing an imaginary world. The concept is often employed in literature, film, video games, and comics, especially works of science fiction and fantasy. The goal is to provide an immersive experience: imagined geography, backstory, inhabitants, beings, environments…often down to the last detail. After the last few years, who hasn't craved a little immersion into the surreality of dreams and imagination and away from our lives in the physical world?

The artists and authors featured in this issue display transcendent modes of envisioning both within the spaces of reality and beyond, whether through achieving a level of focus that transcends, as it does for the artists in Leslie Shershow's "Flow: Searching for Infinity;" or by untethering imagination from the known world, such as in "Altered States" by María-Elisa Heg; or somewhere in between, as in D Wood's profile on Lou Lynn, who reimagines familiar objects beyond practical scale and function into forms recognizable yet uncanny.

More than merely fantasy, worldbuilding has radical potential for envisioning improvements to our reality. The spirit of this is alive in the latest installment of our department "Explorations in Black Jewelry" highlighting artists whose careers were borne unexpectedly out of seeking an item of adornment, finding it did not exist, and then fashioning it for themselves. "In the Studio" profiles Stephen Bruce, whose abstract landscapes create a sense of places familiar yet unknown. Rashaad Newsome's simulacra opulence via appropriated jewelry imagery is the subject of the third installment of Rebekah Frank's series on jewelry-thinking. "LOOK" is curated by Taisha Carrington, whose open call for submissions via Instagram sought entries from artists whose works, or methods of working, can serve as a balm during trying times.

Readers will notice the addition of two new columns. "You Asked, They Answered" is an interview with artist and professor Andrew Kuebeck; the questions crowd-sourced via SNAG's Instagram account (@snagmetalsmith). The second column is the first of several that will explore the ever-shifting landscape of critique in the contemporary field. The first installment, by Liz Steiner, explores notable innovations in presenting digital exhibitions.

By the time this print edition is in your hands, SNAG will have debuted a revamped website. With it will come more interactive magazine content related to each print issue and, in the not-too-distant future, a relaunch of *Metalsmith Tech* with content integrated into the magazine's online presence.

As always, I value and welcome your thoughts and feedback about what you'd like to see in print and online: editor@snagmetalsmith.org.

—Adriane Dalton, Editor-in-Chief

The mission of *Metalsmith* is to explore, analyze, promote, and document excellence and innovation in the field of jewelry and metalsmithing. In achieving this goal, SNAG will produce and oversee the direction and content of a publication that will serve as a significant resource for the metalsmithing field. The editorial content of *Metalsmith* will emphasize contemporary activities, makers, and ideas and incorporate supportive content, relevant critical issues, and the exchange of viewpoints.

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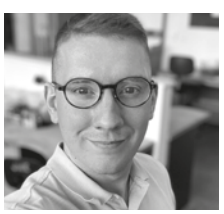
Contributors

Taisha Carrington is a Barbadian multidisciplinary artist who investigates the liminality of life in the Caribbean after colonialism and into the anthropocene through performance, sculpture, and body adornment.

Rebekah Frank is a studio artist and independent writer who enjoys traveling the world in search of interesting experiences to fuel both her art and writing practices.

Sebastian Grant is a curator, art historian, and professor at Parsons School of Design in New York City. He currently works as collections manager of the Susan Grant Lewin Art Jewelry Collection.

María-Elisa Heg is the Digital Content Manager at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft. She is interested in the intersection of craft, popular culture, and community. She received BAs in Visual Arts and Medieval Studies from Rice University, and a MA in Arts Leadership from the University of Houston.



Andrew Kuebeck is an assistant professor and area head of the Jewelry/Metals/Enameling Department at Kent State University. Kuebeck works in a variety of formats ranging from functional jewelry to sculptural objects and vessels. He has lectured and taught workshops nationally on the incorporation of photographic images into jewelry and vessels. His work has been exhibited regionally and nationally and appears in numerous publications. He was a 2012 SNAG Emerging Artist.

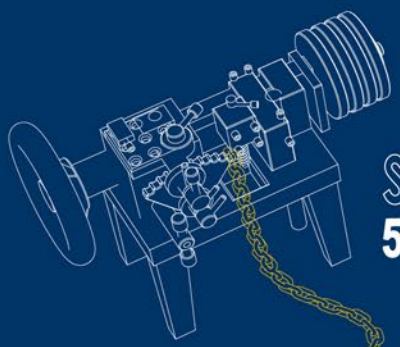
Leslie Shershow is a jeweler and teacher whose projects explore themes of memory, nostalgia, longing, introspection, and the souvenir. She is currently a lecturer at San Diego State University.

Karen Smith is the founder and executive director of We Wield the Hammer, a metalsmith training program for women and girls of African descent. She can be found on Instagram @wewieldthehammer

Liz Steiner is a maker and educator located in Greenville, NC. She can be found in the digital space on instagram @lrsteiner7 and in person at the ArtLab:Innovation Station, also in Greenville, NC.

Jessica Todd is a writer, curator, artist, and arts administrator living in Tampa, Florida. She is passionate about building the creative infrastructures that support artists, as well as studying and addressing issues of equity, access, and inclusion in the arts.

D Wood is a freelance writer and craft scholar. She is the editor of *Craft is Political* (Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021).



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Keynote Speaker

Michelle Millar Fisher

We welcome Michelle Millar Fisher as SNAG's Keynote Speaker, to address the conference theme of Creativity & Hope, setting the tone for three days of inspiring dialogue about how we can come together to build the future we want to see.

Housed in the Contemporary department at the MFA Boston, *Craft Schools* is a multi-year project that encompasses public conversation, artwork acquisitions, and travel to meet artists across all 48 contiguous states, and a book. Fisher's talk will focuses on the care-based reciprocity of teaching and learning as a key inflection point in history-making, expanding and challenging canonized definitions of craft through the lens of the places where people learn about its legacies and shape its futures. **michellemillarfisher.com**

- **Early Career Artists**
- **Rapid Fire Presentations**
- **Live Demonstrations**
- **Education Dialogue**
- **Tech Talk**
- **Historical Inspiration**
- **Innovation as Evolution**
- **Advocacy & Activism**
- **Meeting Points**
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Aminata Conteh

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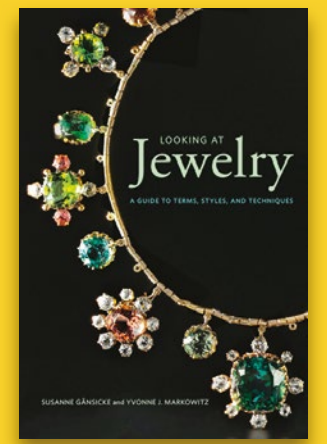

Looking at Jewelry
A Guide to Terms, Styles, and Techniques

Susanne Gänsicke and Yvonne J. Markowitz

The fascination with personal adornment is universal. It is a preoccupation that is primal, instinctive, and uniquely human. With a lively introduction that offers a cultural history of jewelry and its production, this accessible book—the first of its kind—offers concise explanations of key jewelry terms, styles, and techniques.

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VALERIE MITCHELL

On the Edge: Five LA Urban Artists
Gloria Delson Contemporary Arts
Los Angeles, April 2022

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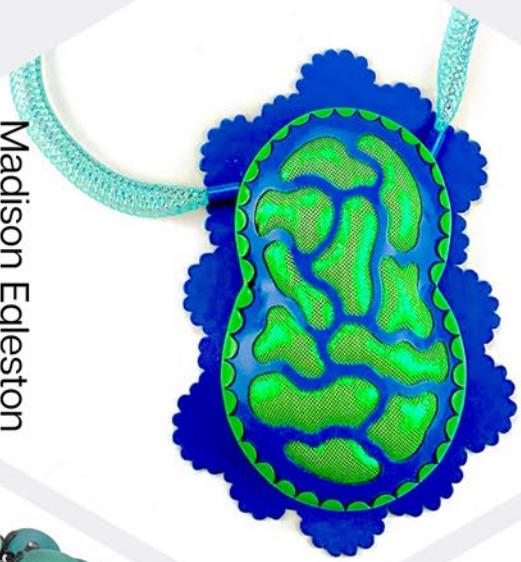

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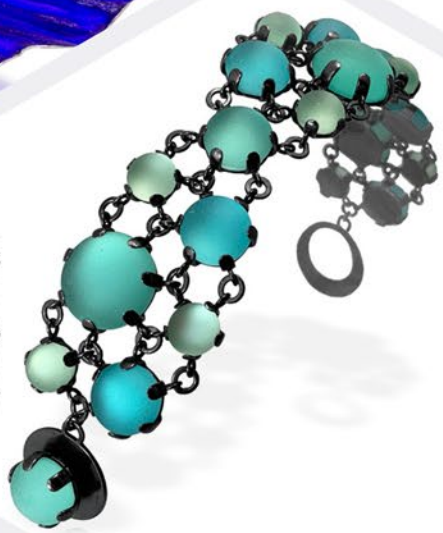

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NEW & NOTEWORTHY

BY JESSICA TODD

ALL THAT GLITTERS

I approached the new *Project Runway*–esque jewelry competition show, *All That Glitters: Britain's Next Jewellery Star*, airing on HBO Max, with a healthy dose of skepticism. Reality TV often boils down content to the lowest common denominator: unadulterated drama. Rarely can this genre of television be labeled quality programming—though sometimes you just need to watch someone in designer shoes flip a table to feel better about your life.

I knew from the opening montage of snapping sawblades that *All That Glitters* would break the mold. Fellow fans of the widely popular *Great British Baking Show* will recognize that familiar ambiance of jovial good sportsmanship, punny humor, healthy humility, and educational content. Both shows substitute the "I'm not here to make friends" cutaways for achievable challenges, inclusive personal storylines, and explanations of various techniques, materials, jewelry forms, vocabulary, and design concepts.

All That Glitters: Britain's Next Jewellery Star, created by Naomi Benson and Emma Willis, Season 1, Twenty Twenty, 2021. Photo courtesy HBO Max/Warner Media.

All that Glitters's superstar judges, Solange Azagury-Partridge and Shaun Leane, are discerning, fair, and encouraging. Each episode is divided into a Bestseller Challenge, where competitors make a production-style piece with mass appeal, and a Bespoke Challenge, which centers on a unique piece commissioned by a special guest. While the work tends toward the fine jewelry end of the spectrum, the Bespoke Challenge demonstrates the way conceptual ideas can be translated through form and function. Processes like soldering, forming, hinge fabrication, and stone setting are explained in surprising detail over seductive close-ups of flowing solder joints and heat-flushed metal.

What I love most about *All That Glitters* is that the show's creators have clearly considered inclusivity and representation. The competitors and judges range in age, race, gender, background, and training. The show's host, comedian Katherine Ryan, doesn't shy away from voicing her feminist perspective. Clients for the Bespoke Challenge include a late-in-life college graduate, a nonbinary drag queen performer, a stay-at-home dad, and an Indian bride seeking a *maang tikka* (a traditional South Asian jewelry piece worn on the forehead) for her wedding.

If I were to make one change, it would be to lengthen the challenge time limits. Three to five hours is not enough time to create higher quality or innovative work. Some jewelers may turn up their noses at the relatively "safe" designs on *All that Glitters*. However, a constant pain point in our field is exposure: getting the word out and the fire lit for handmade jewelry. This series achieves just that in the efficiency of six one-hour episodes. So, steal a friend's HBO Max password and settle in for a binge, and when it comes to reality TV, leave it to the Brits.

MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT

Since its groundbreaking in 2014, the impressive five-story, 137,000-square-foot Museum of the American Arts and Crafts Movement (MAACM) has been rising from the sandy soil of downtown St. Petersburg, Florida. Shrouded in local mystery, the museum's opening was scheduled and delayed several times before it finally welcomed the public in September 2021. Designed by Tampa-based architect Alberto Alfonso,[1] the building features a scrumptious conical entrance, skylit grand atrium, and the kind of spiral staircase Guggenheim dreams are made of.

The casual, low-rise waterfront city of St. Pete is home to a mix of large, sophisticated institutions like the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) St. Petersburg and the Dalí Museum, along with a significant street mural scene and a growing collection of contemporary galleries and studios. As the city has just 265,000 residents, hosting the "only museum in the world dedicated exclusively to the American Arts and Crafts movement" is a pretty big deal.[2]

MAACM presents more than 2,000 objects from the private collection of the Two Red Roses Foundation that reflect a dedication to material and craftsmanship, presented on custom-made displays.[3] The foundation was established in 2004 to promote understanding of the American Arts and Crafts movement by MAACM founder and president Rudy Ciccarello, a collector who gained his wealth in the pharmaceutical industry.[4] To support this mission, the museum is launching a series of educational programs to deepen public knowledge.

Craftsman Workshops, designer
Onondaga Metal Shops/
Benedict Art Studios, manufacturer
Serving tray with spade motif, ca. 1906
Copper
15⅝ x 15⅝ in.
Photo: Jessica Todd

Smiths will rejoice at the prominence of the hammer mark throughout the collection, found on hollowware, candlesticks, and lamps. A striking 1906 Onondaga Metal Shops copper serving tray features soft, bulbous forms that pinch into the sharp points of four exaggerated spade shapes. The visible mark of the hammer emphasizes the maker's expertise in executing such perfect symmetry and crisp lines. Nearby, a copper and silver smoker's set designed by Karl Kipp and manufactured by Roycroft Shops further pares down the decorative elements to evenly spaced squares, both added and subtracted.[5] Only on close inspection do mild curves and bumps in the surface betray the plain geometry and sharp lines of the set, whispering to the viewer, "A hand has been here."

True to the Arts and Crafts movement, realistic and stylized natural forms appear in many works. A pair of wrought-iron seahorse andirons by Roycroft Shops commands a hefty presence in the gallery. The geometric spiral of the seahorse's tail tapers into its undulating body and ends at its trumpeting snout. A vignette of functional objects fit for a mermaid includes the work of two women artists: a bronze shell dish by Marie Zimmermann and a copper and shell lamp by Elizabeth Eaton Burton.[6] Burton transforms the abalone shells into demure flower petals, diffusing the bright lights of the time period's newest technology: electric light bulbs. (MAACM highlights their commitment to women artists in their wall text.)

Though MAACM's website touts some impressive jewelry pieces, none are on display yet, though an exhibition of jewelry is planned. There is another notable omission in the collection: the work of Indigenous artists and makers of color. The presence of Indigenous people is seen only in photographs and paintings by artists of European descent (including one on an MAACM-branded T-shirt in the gift shop). There are also a handful of references to global "inspirations" on object labels, including that of Indigenous, Japanese, and Vietnamese work, with no accompanying representations of said work. MAACM states that they are "committed to furthering scholarship on all underrepresented craftspeople, by carrying out research, identifying, and making space for all who contributed to the Arts and Crafts movement."[3] As all acquisition decisions are made by Ciccarello, the museum staff are looking to educational programming to fill in the gaps in the permanent collection.

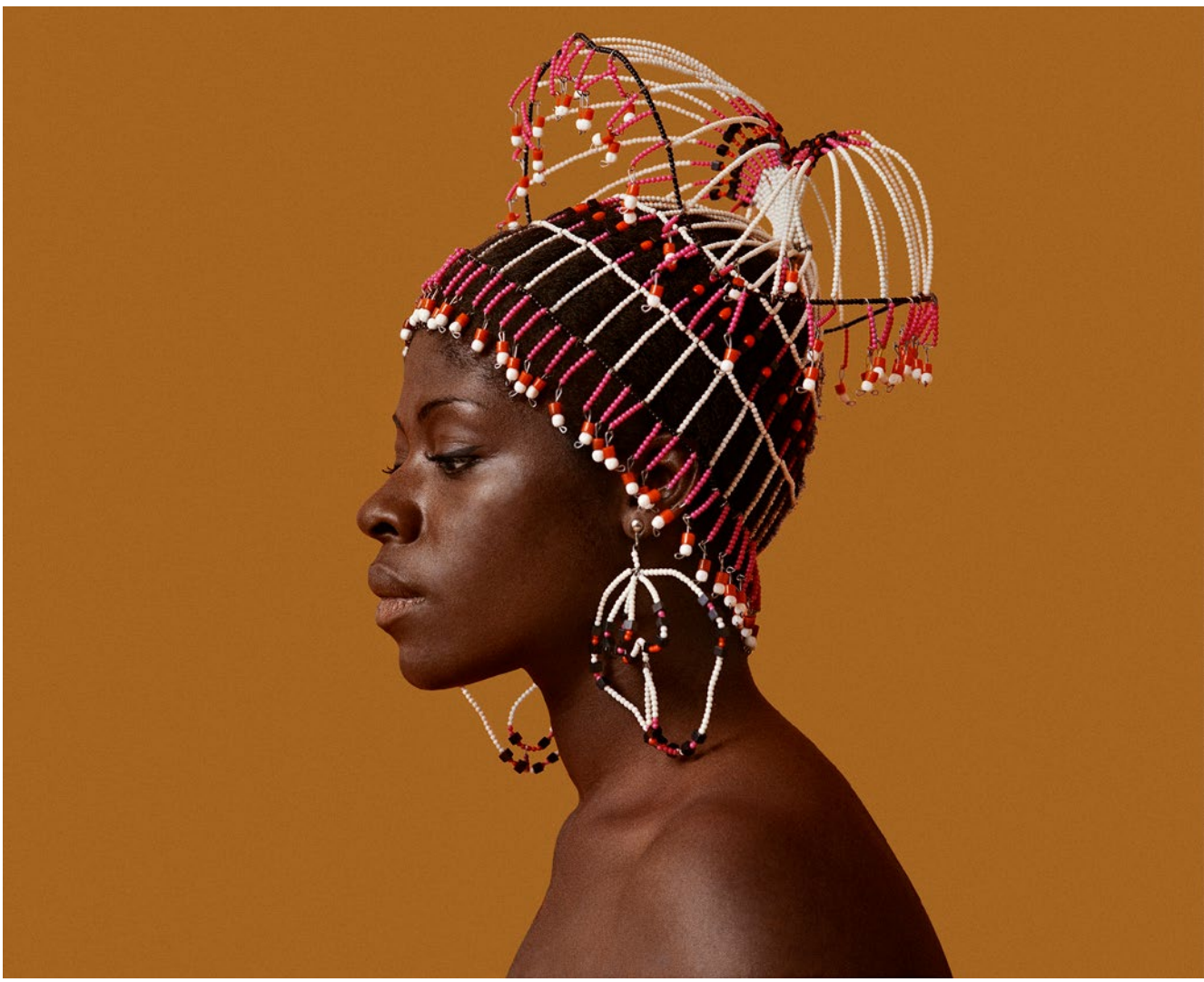
Other museums, galleries, and educational institutions in the region have intentionally addressed equity, access, and inclusion, including the MFA St. Pete, Tampa Museum of Art, and University of South Florida's Contemporary Art Museum. If MAACM is to be *the* Museum that represents the American Arts and Crafts Movement, attention must be paid to whom is included, accompanied by a critical evaluation of uncomfortable histories. Monumental architecture and extravagant collections are not—in 2022—enough to tell the story.

Karl Kipp
American, 1881–1954, designer
Roycroft Shops, manufacturer
Smokers' set (model no. C-34 variant), ca. 1910-1912
Copper, German silver
Photo: Jessica Todd

1 "About the Museum," Museum of the American Arts & Crafts Movement, accessed November 16, 2021, http://www.museumaacm.org/about.html. / **2** "QuickFacts: St. Petersburg city, Florida," United States Census Bureau, accessed November 16, 2021, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/stpetersburgcityflorida/PST045219. / **3** Tracy Kamerer, email message to author, October 18, 2021. / **4** "Short Biography of Rudy Ciccarello," Two Red Roses Foundation, 2017, http://www.tworedroses.com/news/RC%20BIO.pdf. / **5** Object label, Museum of the American Arts and Crafts Movement, St. Petersburg, FL. / **6** Ibid.

EXPLORATIONS IN BLACK JEWELRY: POLITICS

BY SEBASTIAN GRANT



Sikolo Brathwaite wearing a headpiece designed by Carolee Prince. African Jazz-Art Society & Studios (AJASS), Harlem, ca. 1968

Image courtesy of Kwame Brathwaite

AVANT-GARDE ARTIST SENGA NENGUDI voiced the thoughts of many when she stated in a 2018 interview: "Being born Black in America is a Political Act."[1] Nengudi's assertion alludes to both the harrowing history of oppression and slavery in the US, and how Black culture must confront government-instituted laws and systemic racism as a means of survival today. Political activism and organizing efforts implemented by African Americans push towards freedom, and art is a space to highlight the close relationship between Black identity, culture, and the fight for freedom. Like other forms of political art, jewelry is part of this constellation of artistic expression.

The African Jazz-Art Society and Studio (AJASS) in Harlem, founded in 1956 by photographer Kwame Brathwaite and his brother, the activist Elombe Brath, was one of the earliest artistic groups to express modern views of Black pride. Inspired by a desire to assert a unique Black identity, and influenced by the movement of Jamaican activist Marcus Garvey, the brothers expressed Black pride through their activism, their fashion collective called the Grandassa Models, and Brathwaite's photography. AJASS became

known for uniquely Pan-African fashions, and promoting natural hairstyles at a time when Black individuals usually conformed to white beauty standards in order to be accepted by mainstream society.

The jewelry of Carolee Prince was featured among the fashions displayed at AJASS's annual "Naturally" shows, which promoted natural Black beauty. Prince's complex African stringed beadwork in bold colors looked to African craft traditions, and was often featured in Brathwaite's photographs with the Grandassa Models adorned with her designs. Brathwaite's image of his wife features earrings and a stunning headpiece created by Prince, which helps display the pride and joy of Blackness, and connects it to African heritage. By the late 1960s, as the Black Pride movement reached more mainstream audiences, Prince gained some success, including as a designer of headpieces for Nina Simone. Unfortunately little to no significant research has been published on Prince, and further investigation is needed to properly record her life and her contributions to jewelry.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Black Arts Movement, influenced by Civil Rights activism and the Black Power Movement, combined politics and activism with unique expressions of Black culture. Throughout the period, Black artists incorporated African design aesthetics with the burgeoning styles of modern Black urbanism. Chicago-based AfriCOBRA was among the many artist collectives that popped up around the country. The group explored their African roots while creating a contemporary Black aesthetic reflective of Black experiences. Ceramic and assemblage artist Howard Mallory, invited into the group by weaver Napoleon Jones-Henderson, endeavored to create a positive force in the Black community and support Black identity. In addition to ceramics, Mallory designed jewelry. Unfortunately there is very little scholarship or visual evidence of his wearable art, which further illustrates the necessity to document these artists and their work before it becomes lost to the unforgiving nature of history.

Coreen Simpson with daughter Suzanne Simpson-Bryant, pictured with cameos. Photograph taken for a fashion show at Robert De Niro's studio in NYC, ca. 1990s.

Photographer unknown
Image courtesy of Coreen Simpson

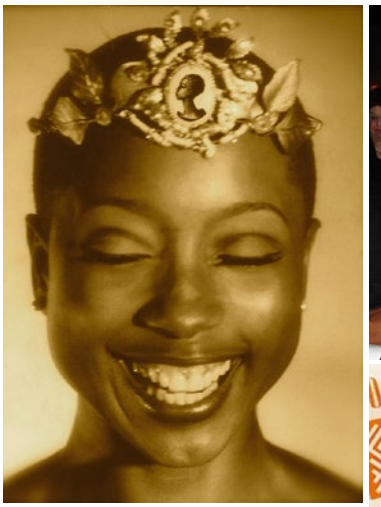
Phyllis Bowdwin
The Middle Passage—African Holocaust Brooch, 1993-96, NYC
Silver
4 x 2⅛ x ⅜ in.
Manufactured by **Who Deserves It More Than You?**
Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum
Museum purchase from
Monet Jewelry Fund, 1997-3-2
Photo © Smithsonian Institution

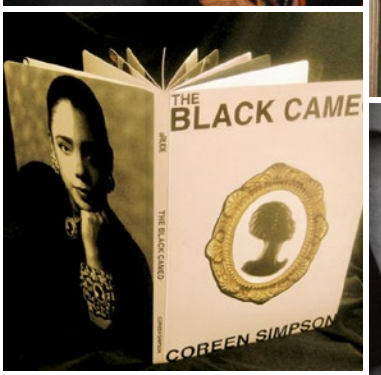
Each of artist Phyllis Bowdwin's brooches came with a poster which explained the ancestral origins of the people of Africa and the horrors they had to face in the menacing presence of the slave ship.

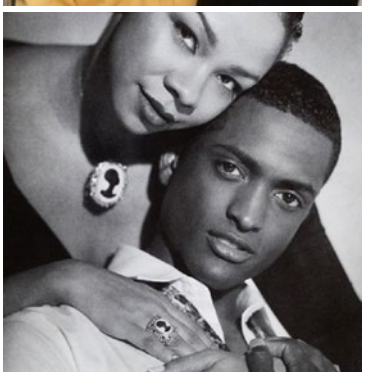
Coreen Simpson gave political jewelry a new focus in 1989 with her successful business The Black Cameo Collection™. Simpson began her career as a photographer working for the *Village Voice* and *Amsterdam News,* capturing scenes from Harlem's nightlife; then in Paris she covered the fashion scene, contributing to *Vogue* and *Paris Match*. Her first foray into jewelry design began while looking for a piece of jewelry to accessorize one of her shoots. When she was unsuccessful in finding a suitable piece in any local store, she decided to create it herself. "I consider myself a conceptual designer… I have an idea then I go to model makers with a sketch […] and make it happen,"[2] says Simpson. She would often wear her own pieces at photo shoots, and eventually built up a clientele.

When a client requested a cameo that featured a person of color, Simpson's famous Black Cameo Collection was born. In Simpson's research into the long history of cameos, any Black examples she could find often featured racist imagery, such as exoticized Blackamoor designs and Black stereotypes with discriminatory tropes. Simpson decided to create her own set of cameos featuring individual portraits of women that highlighted the diverse and unique features of Black beauty, pieces with which people would identify. Eventually licensed by AVON, the The Black Cameo Collection™ became a great success. Notable clients include Debbie Allen, Nancy Wilson, Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou, and Rihanna. When recently reflecting on her storied career, Simpson states, "My work has kept me moving with energy. [I'm] grateful to God for giving me such a beautiful life in art."[3]

Phyllis Bowdwin is one of the most outspoken artists to make an engaging political statement through jewelry. Although now working as a writer and a storyteller, in the early 1990s Bowdwin's jewelry encouraged a confrontation with the uncomfortable parts of Black history that are not often the subject of wearable art. Bowdwin's interest in jewelry started in the late '60s. When trying to find an accessory to match a dress, she "came upon a spiritual revelation" that she could make it herself.[4] With $20 worth of jewelry materials gifted to her by her godmother, Bowdwin started creating beaded and wire jewelry. She began her career by taking classes at the 92nd Street Y and received her bachelor's at Parsons. She continued experimenting with different







Left: A selection of images that demonstrate the versatility of Coreen Simpson's Black Cameo Collection™, highlights from Simpson's career, and the collection's popularity with celebrities and public figures.

Images courtesy of Coreen Simpson

materials and techniques; however, the inspiration for her most famous work came from a radio talk show, which doubted the harsh treatment and cruelty of African Americans during slavery. Angered by the commentary, Bowdwin immediately began researching, and was struck by an image of a crowded slave ship, with its inhabitants stuffed together like sardines. Bowdwin decided to use it to create her most emotional piece: a series of six brooches entitled *The Middle Passage—African Holocaust*. Capturing the diagram in silver or brass, she adorned different versions with dangling ornaments at the bottom either with cowrie shells or disembodied heads held by nooses. The brooches garnered praise for their bold depictions, but also some criticism from members of the Black community trying to escape the past. Yet Bowdwin's intention was to confront and learn from the past in order to prevent the same mistakes in the future.

Through their deep engagement with the horrors of the past, and through their confident displays of Black Pride, these artists and designers contribute to a greater understanding and appreciation of Black identity in America, and offer a path forward to guarantee its acceptance in the fabric of American history.

1 Anna Souter, "'Being Born Black in America Is a Political Act': An Interview With Senga Nengudi," *Hyperallergic*, September 26, 2018, https://hyperallergic.com/462256/being-born-black-in-america-is-a-political-act-an-interview-with-senga-nengudi. / **2** Coreen Simpson, interview with the author, October 3, 2021. / **3** Ibid. / **4** Phyllis Bowdwin, interview with the author, November 4, 2020.

YOU ASKED, THEY ANSWERED
ANDREW KUEBECK

Were you ever blown away by a piece of art jewelry? Who was it by and what was so compelling about the work?

Waterman, a brooch by Gijs Bakker from the early 1990s, incorporates a found black-and-white Bruce Weber photograph laminated onto PVC with diamonds set on it. The image is of a man crouching and pouring a bucket of water down his back. The diamonds are set to cascade along his muscles as the water spills over them. I first saw this piece in undergrad when I was just beginning my studies into art jewelry. I was captivated by the materials that Bakker used, as well as the playful and erotic imagery. I had never seen another piece of art jewelry that used pictorial information like this, especially an image of the male nude. There was a "tongue-in-cheek" quality to this work that I enjoyed, while the precious materials spoke to how seriously the artist took the subject matter. It is a piece that resonates with me to this day.

I'm thinking about getting an MFA and applying to collegiate teaching jobs, but I've heard about how hard it is to get a tenure track position. How do you make your living as an educator and artist? Do you have a side gig?

It is true that collegiate teaching positions are competitive to get, take a great amount of work to acquire, and are sometimes stressful to maintain (especially while going through tenure). That being said, I honestly wouldn't want any other job. I enjoy the structure of my job; I enjoy the environment that I work in. I enjoy continuing my studio practice, and above all I feel blessed that I get to talk about art every day.

I decided that I wanted to go into academia when I was in graduate school. The ability to spend days in the studio working on my own pieces felt wonderful, as did the days when I would go into the classroom and work with my students on their own projects. I couldn't fathom doing anything else. After graduate school I was fortunate to begin teaching as a non-tenure track faculty member at Bowling Green State University. I was able to gain teaching experience and build my portfolio, and after four years I was hired as a tenure track faculty member at Kent State University.

While the majority of my income comes from my university teaching position, I am fortunate to be represented by Charon Kransen Arts, which sells my work to clients around the world. I also occasionally work as a visiting artist conducting workshops and presenting artist talks. The way university positions are structured allows me to continue to make work and travel while maintaining the stability of a teaching position that I enjoy dearly.

Lumberjack Brooch, 2009
Sterling silver, copper, brass, enamel, photo emulsion
3 x 3 x 1 in.
Photo: Kevin Montague

Keyhole Culture: Dave, 2012
Sterling silver
3 x 3 x ½ in.
Photo: Keith Meiser

Keyhole Culture: Anthony, 2012
Sterling silver
3 x 4 x ½ in.
Photo: Keith Meiser

Are there any queer art jewelers you think the world should know about?

I look to Keith Lewis to understand how to successfully navigate a life as an artist/educator. His work and studio practice made him visible on the international stage, with pieces in museums and a full academic career under his belt. Keith was the first queer artist that I knew of who was unapologetic about the imagery and subject matter in his work, embracing the nudity and content that many had shied away from. I found a strength of character

Herman in Profile, 2022
Sterling silver, fine silver, enamel, image on enamel
3 x 4 x ¼ in.
Courtesy of Charon Kransen Arts
Photo courtesy of the artist

in Keith's work that I thought was dormant in that of many others, and have been greatly influenced by him.

I'm having a hard time keeping up with all the social media platforms, the Snapchats, WhatsApp, and the TikToks. As a millennial, do you ever feel out of the loop with kids these days? How do you keep up with all the new trends that keep popping up?

I have nearly eliminated social media from my life for the past four years. While initially I thought of it as a way to more fully connect with myself, I found that once I got off social media I didn't miss it. I can understand the value of social media as a means of staying connected to others, promoting oneself and one's work, or advertising events, but it became exhausting trying to keep up with one platform, and the required curation of my digital life. With the advent of so many platforms, I can't even imagine how difficult, time-consuming, emotionally draining, and complex it is to be "digitally fully present." I understand that I am missing out on some aspects and advantages of these platforms, but am confident that the benefits of being off of them far outweigh any detractions. I really like email.

Silhouette BROoch 6, 2022
Copper
3 x 4 x ¼ in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

Do you ever get any blowback from using nudes and sexual symbols in your work? How do you deal with the negativity?

The art jewelry community is accepting and understanding of diverse viewpoints. Having been in the arts for nearly a decade now, I've been fortunate to never experience any "blowback" about my art. Every once in a while I get the occasional "I'm praying for you" comment after I give an artist lecture, but I have never felt threatened or targeted because of the work that I make. My academic position has allowed me to explore themes and ideas I am certain that I wouldn't be able to if I were solely concerned about saleability and the desires of a commercial market.

On a personal level, I have had some struggles talking to friends and family about my work. Early on, many didn't understand what I was trying to talk about (oppression, not sex), and it took years for some to become more comfortable with what I was doing. It was difficult, but I honestly got through it by continuing to make the work I loved, putting it into the world as much as I could, and defending it when I needed to. The more my work was exhibited, the fewer people I had to convince of its merits.

What is one of your guilty pleasures?

Without a doubt it's a great blue cheese. I prefer Stilton.

Keep an eye on our Instagram @snagmetalsmith for upcoming opportunities to ask questions to a rotating selection of makers, educators, gallerists, curators, small business owners, and more.

STEPHEN BRUCE: THE BADASS WHO PAINTS WITH ACID

BY KAREN SMITH

STEPHEN BRUCE IS A SELF-TAUGHT artist who eschews the idea that any artist can be self-taught. Based in Richmond, California, he creates landscapes on copper and brass using primarily organic acid patinas, many of which have adorned the sets of television shows like *Two and a Half Men* and films such as *Iron Man*. Yet he humbly suggests that his experimentation with formulas and techniques is simply a by-product of simple curiosity and the gift of mentorship, something that he pays forward in both small and large ways.

As a youth, Bruce was not encouraged to choose art as a career path, though he acknowledges now that he was quite artistic in many ways. Instead, he became an entrepreneur. As he built a solid career producing art exhibitions and representing visual artists, his marketing background gave him a huge boost in teaching artists how to present their art for public consumption and sale. The artists Bruce represented recognized his creativity and first encouraged him to express himself, then challenged him to push his expressions further. After some soul searching, Bruce accepted that his

Thicket, 2018
Brass
28 x 78 in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

proximity to art and artists wasn't simply a fluke but an unconscious lifelong dream.

Bruce has always been drawn to copper. As a child he collected bits of wire and other scraps. "I made what I call 'funky little bracelets and rings,'"[1] he says, and sold them to his friends and family. Even as a youngster, the colorful patinas spoke to him. Remembering this lifelong love of copper and other metals, Bruce thought he might like to be a sculptor. In 2004, he began studying on his own: researching, burrowing into books, and having conversations with other artists. A mentor suggested that he might want to consider that "not everybody owns sculpture, but everybody has walls." His early works were three-dimensional pieces that he referred to as "jewelry for your walls." He pivoted from his marketing career into a full-time creative practice in 2006.

As Bruce grew as an artist, he became obsessed with creating scenes that elicit

Chocolate Ox #1, 2010
Copper
36 x 36 in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

Boyton Canyon #4, 2019
Copper
14 x 30 in.
Photo courtesy
of the artist

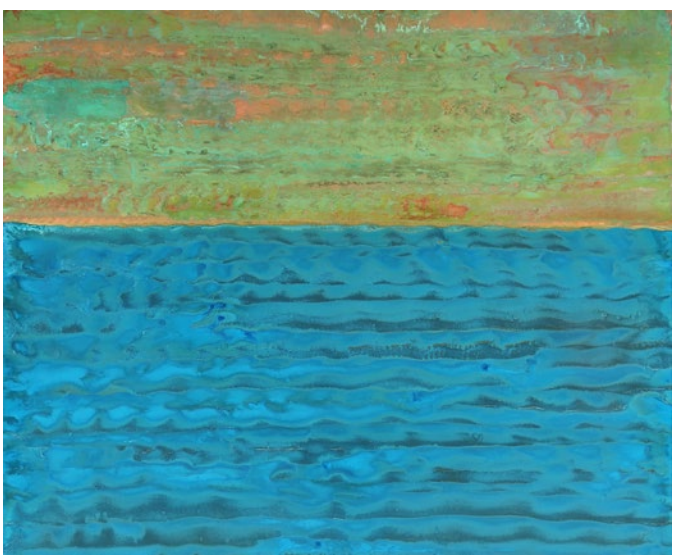
emotion about space and time. Always fascinated by artists whose works implied movement, Bruce mused, "How do you imply movement in something that's still?" His experiments with patinas on large skids of copper resulted in the abstract landscapes and seascapes that helped him move toward his personal style. But it wasn't a direct route to achieving successful results.

As Bruce read more and more about patinas, he began to experiment. He was first introduced to the hot patina process, but he burned himself rather badly. Hoping for safer results with cold patinas, Bruce tried undiluted ammonia straight from a spray bottle in a poorly ventilated workspace. He passed out from the fumes and was revived by a studio mate. He decided organic acids, such as those found in a well-stocked pantry or fridge, would be a much safer alternative.

Bruce started with vinegar. Then he added salt. Then he tried other household acids: tomato juice, pineapple juice, the juice from pickled peppers, okra, and beets, chili sauce, and more. Once he realized his desired results, he got into his groove and everything changed. As Bruce began cataloging his results, he was able to achieve colors evocative of Sedona red–toned landscapes and Pacific blue seascapes. Bruce allows, "My biggest artistic influence is the greatest artist ever, Mother Earth. Every artist is imitating her. My seascapes are inspired by the beauty of the ocean, perhaps an aerial view from the sky…my abstracts an attempt to mimic the colors and patterns of some geological formations…and my landscapes are my best efforts to capture a fleeting moment in a sunset, a sunrise, or on the horizon."

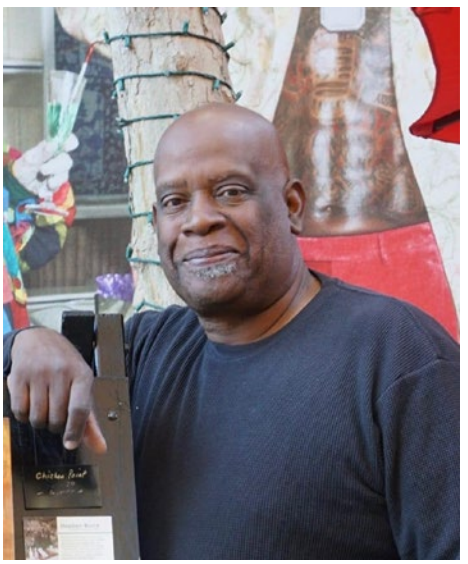
When Bruce began his study of patinas, he didn't think about anything except how an acid in an environment causes a color change. But patina is not simply "oxidation"; it changes the structure of the metals and it ages it. "I think aging is beautiful in buildings, in women, and in nature!" he exclaims. The realization caused Bruce to wonder if he could identify how specific he could be with a patina and then predict a color change. Learning to not only predict colors but, as he is fond of saying, to "paint" with them, gave Bruce the tools to create abstracted compositions such as *Bahía de Cata* (2010) and *Chocolate Ox (2010)*.

Bruce believes that artists owe it to each other to encourage and assist one another. This is but one reason that Bruce gives back to the community in the form of mentorship. The SkidMore Project was born after a conversation with



Before We Meet, 2014
Brass
32 x 40 in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

a Bay Area–based teacher about the poor representation of Black children in math and science. The SkidMore Project's mission is to demystify science and teach students about their own unique creativity. Bruce's reflections on his own primary school education were mixed; he recalled loving math and science but was never encouraged by his teachers. Understanding his creative work as both scientific and artistic, he reasoned that if children could experience science by replicating experiments in art, they might be more excited and successful. "But recording data and experimenting is empowering. And the children become more and more engaged. When I'm in the classroom, and you see the lightbulb go on, and when you see children get excited about art, and science, it's powerful!" he says.



Stephen Bruce.

Image courtesy of the artist

Bruce's work with the SkidMore Project started as an afterschool enrichment program, teaching children about acids and bases, and their effects on metal. Through a combination of lessons and hands-on practice, students experiment together to each create their own metal art, and the bonus is understanding the science behind it. The children make their own decisions about which kinds of acids they want to investigate. One child brought a combo of lime juice and soy sauce; a child of East Indian heritage used lemon pickle leftover from a family dinner; another brought in a chirimoya. "The children use things from their lives, and the idea that they can mine their own culture and use it to create art both excites and empowers them," Bruce allows.

Bruce wants his students to understand that they can not only control a patina, but they can also paint with it in exciting ways. However, Bruce cautions them that attempts at total control restrict a significant part of the creativity. Spontaneity is a crucial element, and he encourages students to be with the process, even if the results are not immediately satisfying. He says, "Mistakes are part of the process. No one ever said that I could learn from mistakes when I was a kid; I was just called dumb." He says that the children think, "if this guy can create artwork with pickle juice on copper, what can I create and bring to the world?"

Bruce feels fortunate to have a community of artists who nurtured his own artistic dream, and they helped him come to believe that he, too, could be a "badass artist." Through his roles with The SkidMore Project, as a chair of the steering committee of the annual Bay Area exhibition *Art of The African Diaspora*, and as Board President of the San Francisco–based fine arts organization Red Umbrella, Bruce helps create that community for others.

1 All quotes from conversation between Stephen Bruce and the author in November 2021.

Bahía de Cata, 2010
Copper
60 x 24 in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

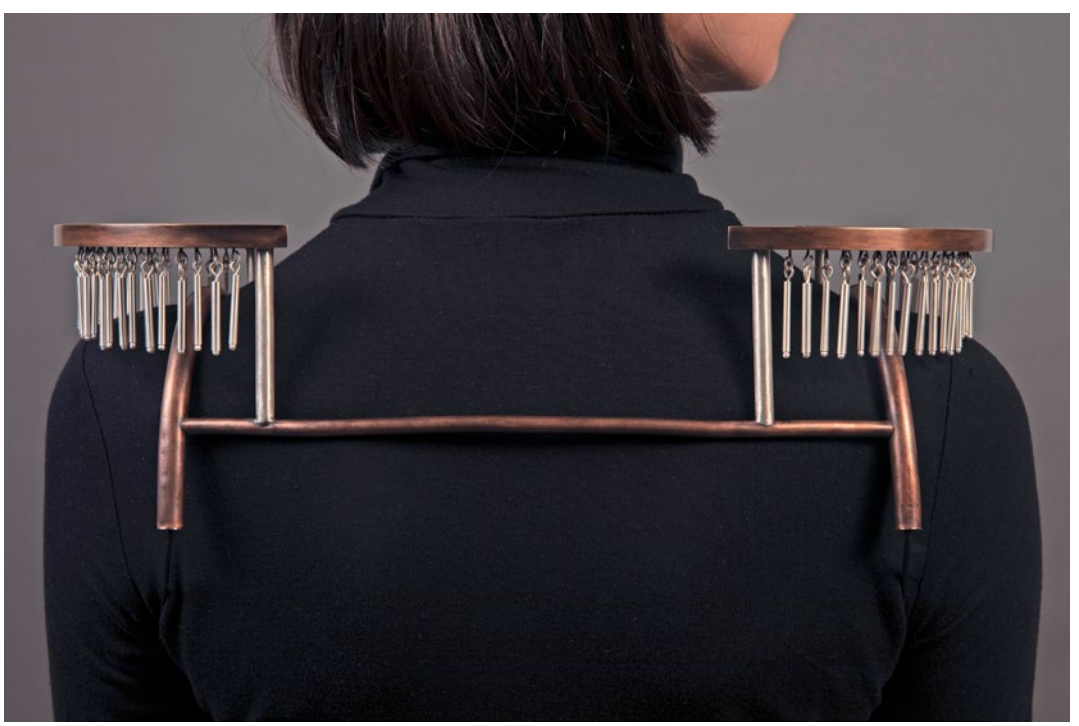
ESCAPE ARTISTS

BY TAISHA CARRINGTON

RITUAL, RELIGION, AND SPIRITUALITY CAN be a balm in times when our daily lives are disrupted. On the other hand, we may find them limiting when we feel settled and confident. *Escape Artists* presents work that explores the duality of these practices as both restrictive and freeing. Each artist traverses this contrast in their work in response to their social environments, whether that be a political movement, the aftermath of a natural disaster, global pandemic, or a combination of all of these and more.

Through repetitive tasks or being on "autopilot" during the making process, these artists find comfort in familiar materials—or by creating alternate, immersive, or escapist routines and objects that build worlds outside of our reality. Naama Levit weaves ritual into their practice by creating temporary, intimate spaces that tap into sensory memory to investigate control. Jason Stein finds comfort in manipulating the materials he works with, while encoding messages of vulnerability through Morse code. Leslie Shershow and Megan Gottfried create playful alternate spaces, one on a micro and the other on a macro level respectively, offering places for brief escape from reality. The works of Melis Agabigum and Tracy Welling evoke otherworldly topographies. Other artists, such as Ariella Har-Even and Hilla Shapira, present their questions through pieces that rely on the wearer for presentation. And MJ Tyson takes an introspective approach, creating works in which the ritual is inherent in the materials—other people's discarded keepsakes.

These artists, through the rituals of art practices and self-defined spiritual acts, offer ways to contemplate moments of transcendence in our own lives.



Ariella Har-Even
Listen, 2019
Patinated bronze and copper, sterling silver, leather cord
4½ x 14½ x 6 in.
Photo: Sydney Givens

"The chaos that surrounds us is often so loud it easily becomes overbearing. We search and yearn for peace yet hope to find it in the noise that surrounds us. In this state of engulfment, we become still and motionless, we acquiesce to a numbness fed by fear of moving forward. But it takes movement—sometimes slow, sometimes gentle. Connection to the divine, to that which is elusive yet ever-present, that which is ubiquitous and lost—move and you will call it, take action and you will hear it answer."

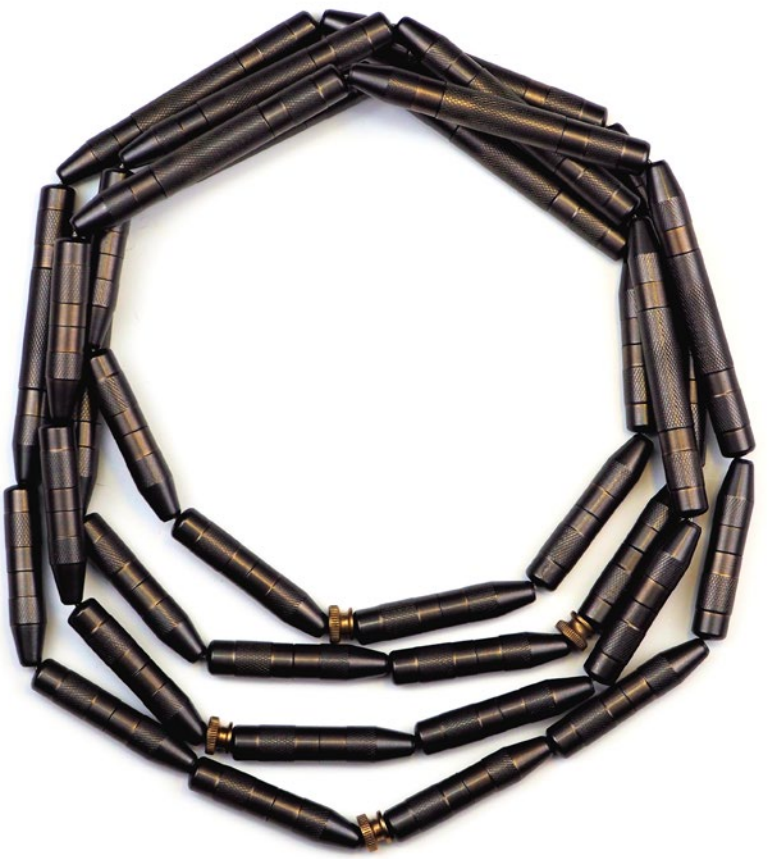
@ariella.hareven

Megan Gottfried
Room to Room, 2021
Fiber, synthetic and natural dyes, 60 ft. of wire, rug, wood, slides, airplane cables
64 x 105 in. (folded, not including cables)
Photo courtesy of the artist

"*Room to Room* resembles a playful pillow fort. I hope to invite viewers to find comfort in familiarity and escape into their imagination. My work is about providing a safe space for creativity. The soft fabric is hung at a low height to resemble the intimacy of a small, handmade space."
@gottfried.megan

MJ Tyson
O Mary, 2021
Sterling silver, devotional medals
12 x 6 x 1 in., 22 in. long
Courtesy of Sienna Patti Contemporary
Photo courtesy of the artist

"*O Mary* is made from collected devotional medals. It's a gathering of tokens, of hopes, and of lives. How do these charms express devotion? Perhaps, at least, they tie our scattered lives together."
@mj_tyson



Jason Stein
Cry for Help, 2018
Steel, gold-plated brass, copper, stainless steel
104 x ⅛ x ½ in.
Photo: Jason Stein

"The 104 in. long loop can be worn as a necklace or held in the hand and used as prayer, meditation, or komboloi beads…The elements of the piece form the international Morse Code distress message 'SOS' through the use of long and short found object units in the standard pattern of three dots, three dashes, and three dots or '… - - - …'. The code repeats in the necklace three times."
@jasonsteinmetals

Hilla Shapira and Naama Levit
SITE NON-SPECIFIC, 2021
Cotton, polyfill, copper, Jerusalem stone (limestone)
39 x 33 in.
Photo: Hilla Shapira

"This project is examining notions of utilitarian objects during everyday rituals. These objects carried on the body move and change through time and context. Everything is specific and random at the same time. Things can have more than one purpose, practical or spiritual. Fluidity of forms and functions, repetitiveness, and multiplicity are the principles that guide us."
@hilla__shapira

Naama Levit
Matter to dust, 2021
Crushed Jerusalem stone, polymer
7 x 8 cm
Photo: Benedikt Adler

"Can you sense the smell of the land? The touch of a stone picked from the ground? Does the feeling of familiarity bring comfort or distress? What is it about physical material that can transcend us, and create a trick of the mind or a trick of the heart? Setting out to explore these questions I took stones from my own landscape and broke them down by crushing and sifting repeatedly to achieve a compilation of 'land samples' in the form of sand in different grits and tones. I used the sand as raw material to make new formations."
@naamalevit

"My work represents ideas of escape through both process and concept. It is possible to lose oneself through the traditions and techniques of papermaking and stretching individual pieces of fiber. The act of drawing as a response to texture becomes a soothing ritual itself. These pieces were made in response to both the private and public grief and tragedy that 2020 brought to us."
@tlwelling

Tracy Welling
Weeping Wisdom, 2021
(detail left)
Handmade abaca paper,
hand stretched kozo fiber,
copper net, paint, ink,
pearls, wood glue, felt
11 x 9½ ft.
Photo courtesy of the artist

"Repetitive processes are outlets. I am a machine when I enter my studio: walk in, sit down, turn 'off' brain, let my hands take over. My hands repeat the same motion again and again till they cannot go any longer…My thoughts go in circles, my crochet hook builds upon segments of circles. Repetition, and internalization of that repetition, becomes ritual, myth, and ultimately wisdom through consciousness. By participating in an action repeatedly, I create a narrative that exists through the life of that repetitive experience."
@ms_melisbanu

Melis Agabigum
When the sun rises, sometimes it's hard to believe there ever was a night, 2016
Copper, spray paint, graphite
Various dimensions depending on installation
Photo courtesy of the artist

Leslie Shershow
Short-Cut 3 (front and back), 2021
Copper, aluminum, luminescent film, resin, fake pearls
12 x 7¾ x ½ in.
Photos courtesy of the artist

"Guided by horror vacui, the fear of empty spaces, *Short-Cut* exposes an insatiable seeking, and a desire to evade unwanted thoughts by distracting myself with things...It comes together in an articulated, chaotic, and often indiscernible jumble, representing a put-on magic, and an attempt to aggressively find joy within my work."
@shersh_oh

RASHAAD NEWSOME: COLLAGING LUXURY

BY REBEKAH FRANK

Isolation, 2020
Photo collage on paper in custom mahogany and resin artist frame with automotive paint
58⅝ x 53 x 4 in.
Photo: Thomas Müller
Courtesy of Rashaad Newsome Studio via Jessica Silverman

CLASSIFYING RASHAAD NEWSOME as a multidisciplinary artist fails to convey the complexity of his creative output. His work effortlessly intertwines collage, drawing, sculpture, video, music, computer programming, and performance, integrating these various disciplines in delightfully subversive ways. Born in New Orleans and now working between New York and Oakland, California, Newsome defies definition and plays with genres while incorporating politics, hip-hop culture, and art history.

A through line in Newsome's practice is his skill at combining elements from disparate sources to create original results, clearly seen in his photo-based collages. Dating back to 2009, his early collages were composed on white backgrounds mounted in simple white frames. In the decade that followed, he began incorporating visually dense backgrounds, often a pattern made of repeated luxury objects that highlighted the central image, barely contained within antique frames. Newsome's most recent collages, created during the pandemic and presented as part of the Oakland Museum of California's (OMCA) exhibition *Mothership: Voyage into Afrofuturism,* are composed on black backgrounds and framed by matching shiny, black, ornate frames.

Parenting While Black, 2020
Photo collage on paper in custom mahogany and resin artist frame with automotive paint
45 x 49¾ x 3⅝ in.
Courtesy of Rashaad Newsome Studio

Newsome sources material for the collages from magazine advertisements featuring luxury objects like Rolex watches, expensive cars, and high-end jewelry. He combines these with other images that include body parts, African sculptures, and masks. In the catalog essay *If You See Me, Am I Real?* for the 2019 exhibition *To Be Real* at the Philadelphia Photo Arts Center, curator Jasmine Wahi speaks of the "ambiguously androgynous body parts pulled from both [Newsome's] own photographs and those appropriated from various glossy magazines that sell the idea of desire."[1] The original image maintains its identity, even as the artist pieces it with other elements to become part of a larger visual piece.

There is a clear connection to Cubism in Newsome's abstracted compositions. He actively re-appropriates this appropriated artistic movement, building his collages with the African sculptures and masks from which early 20th-century European artists took inspiration. As a queer Black artist, Newsome builds upon, loops back, and reinterprets the world around him. Newsome states in the exhibition at OMCA that his work is "a way to disassemble what I see in the world and construct images, objects, films, and performances that provide space to think through a more nuanced sense of Blackness, one that reflects the complexity of my lived experience."

This is the third essay in a multipart series celebrating artists whose practices illustrate *jewelry thinking*. These artists may or may not have a background in jewelry, but their work exhibits qualities that jewelry artists will recognize, including commitment to materiality, respect of process, and focus on the body.

The two pieces shown at OMCA, *Thirst Trap* and *Parenting While Black*, along with *Isolation*, a piece from the same series, reflect the intensity of the circumstances of 2020. Newsome made these works while he sheltered in place in Oakland and the violence against Black Americans played out across the country. The figure in *Parenting While Black* cradles a child as a single tear runs down its face while, in *Isolation,* the figure's wide-open eyes convey shock and horror while layered explosions of fire and smoke emanate from its disembodied face. The chiseled definition of the musculature of both figures in *Thirst Trap*, one in flesh, the other in wood, coordinates perfectly as the come-hither pose speaks to the pent-up sexual tension during the pandemic. These three collages highlight Newsome's ability to convey the complex range of emotions felt by so many during the rollercoaster that was 2020.

Writer and performance artist Alok Vaid-Menon notes that Newsome "pairs nontraditional [..] with traditional Africa [sic] statues, his old work with his new work, luxury with idolatry, novelty with antiquity."[2] At OMCA, Newsome shows his penchant for mixing old and new by displaying *Thirst Trap* and *Parenting While Black* against an intricately latticed wallpaper. The wallpaper refers to his earlier use of a dense, patterned background within the frame to set off the central collaged image. In this iteration, the background is moved out of the frame and onto the wall itself, creating an immersive experience of the work. The wallpaper is composed of gigantic luxury brooches that dazzle from afar and draw the viewer into the intense, emotive presence of the collages.

In *The Art of Immortality 2* from 2019, Newsome collages jeweled elements of different sizes to create a bouquet of flowers, vase included. Part of a series of floral still life–inspired pieces, the arrangement is bursting with color and vitality; a sparkling dragonfly and butterfly make appearances on the perimeters. On closer look, the viewer sees that the center of each flower is a human mouth. The mouths smile, grills glisten, gapped teeth laugh, lips stretch to shout, and tongues flick suggestively. This seemingly playful mashup celebrates the variety of desire–desire for other bodies, for adornment, and for objects.

Newsome's interest in jewelry and luxury objects as symbols connects to his abiding interest in European heraldic tradition. His earlier collages adapted the formulaic visuals of this tradition by replacing

Visitors looking at *Parenting While Black* (left) and *Thirst Trap* both by Rashaad Newsome in *Mothership: Voyage Into Afrofuturism* exhibition at OMCA.

Photo: Odell Hussey Photography Courtesy of Oakland Museum of California (OMCA)

The Art of Immortality 2, 2019
(detail, left)
Collage in custom mahogany and resin artist frame with leather and automotive paint
66⅝ x 66⅝ x 4½ in.
Courtesy of Rashaad Newsome Studio via Jessica Silverman

Thirst Trap (detail), 2020
Photo collage on paper in custom mahogany and resin artist frame with automotive paint
45 x 49¾ x 3⅝ in.
Photo: Thomas Müller
Courtesy of Rashaad Newsome Studio via Jessica Silverman

dragons and other medieval imagery with modern luxuries from gold chains to high-end cars, introducing a visual vocabulary to celebrate today's hip-hop and pop culture. His development of this new iconography was presented in the solo show *Herald* at Marlborough New York in 2011.

Heraldry later led Newsome to performances that reimagined medieval rites of passage through the hierarchical ranking for our current times. His 2015 *King of Arms* processional merged the New Orleans tradition of second line parades with heraldic formality and costuming during Art/Miami, integrating many aspects of Black American culture. Heavily involved in the New York ballroom scene (a LGBTQ+ subculture of performance-based competitions), Newsome now stages an annual King of Arms Art Ball, inviting performances in categories based on art historical themes.

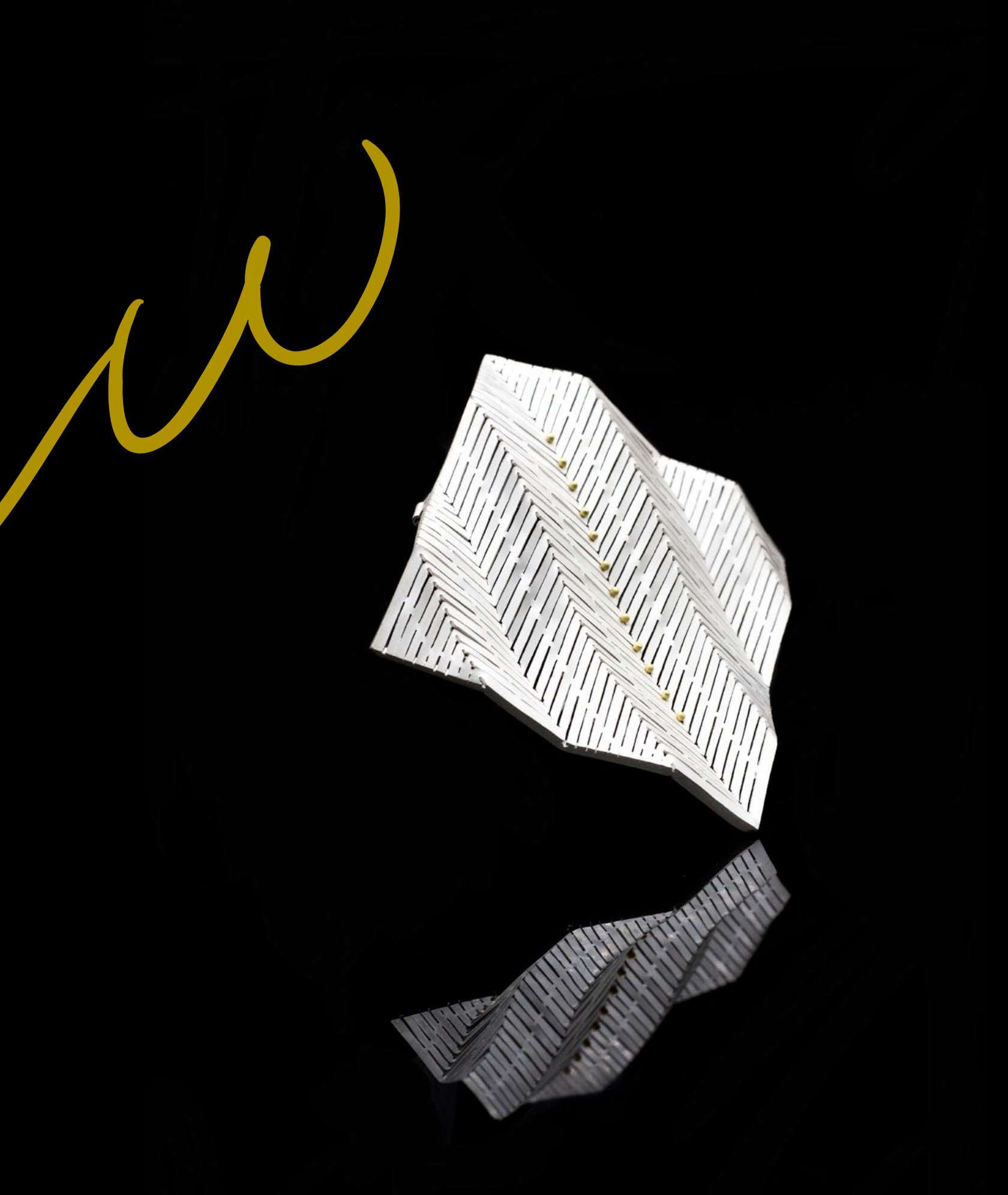
Newsome's skill at mixing, sampling, and re-inventing shared history through his experience as a queer, Black artist is expansive and questioning. As Vaid-Menon writes of Newsome's work, "Perhaps the cohesion we seek comes from developing a different relationship with the complexity we fear."[3] While his greater body of work dips into medieval heraldic iconography, drops into the New York ballroom scene, spins on the beauty of oral gestures, and flaunts vocal virtuosity, the flash of the jewelry he uses may be what opens our eyes to Newsome's nuanced worldview.

1 Jasmine Wahi, "If You See Me, Am I Real?" in *Rashaad Newsome: To Be Real* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Photo Arts Center, 2019), accessed November 7, 2021, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ieheppDjdo5rnimOhGnsOybT0_zw6tM_/view. / **2** Alok Vaid-Menon, "Looking Back/Looking Forward," accessed November 14, 2021, https://spark.adobe.com/page/WYVMgBGz5claz. / **3** Vaid-Menon, "Looking Back/Looking Forward."

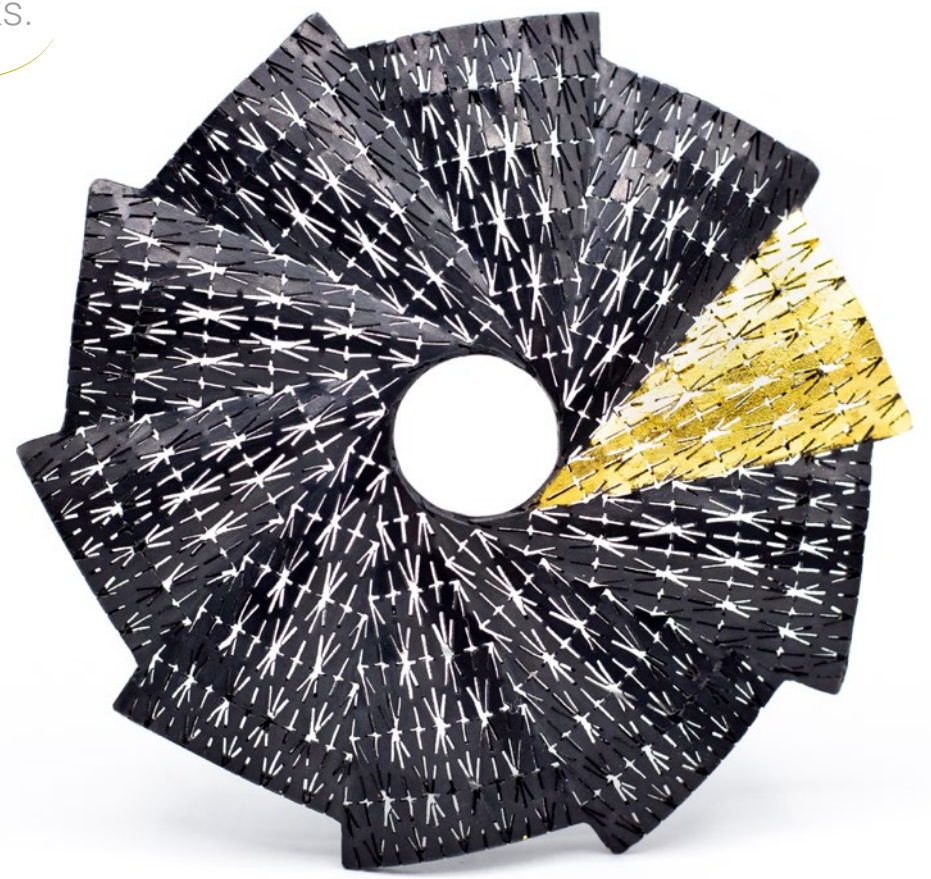
Flo

Searching for Infinity

By Leslie Shershow



Metalsmiths are primed to achieve flow through years of technical discipline, engaging with small details, and performing repetitive tasks.

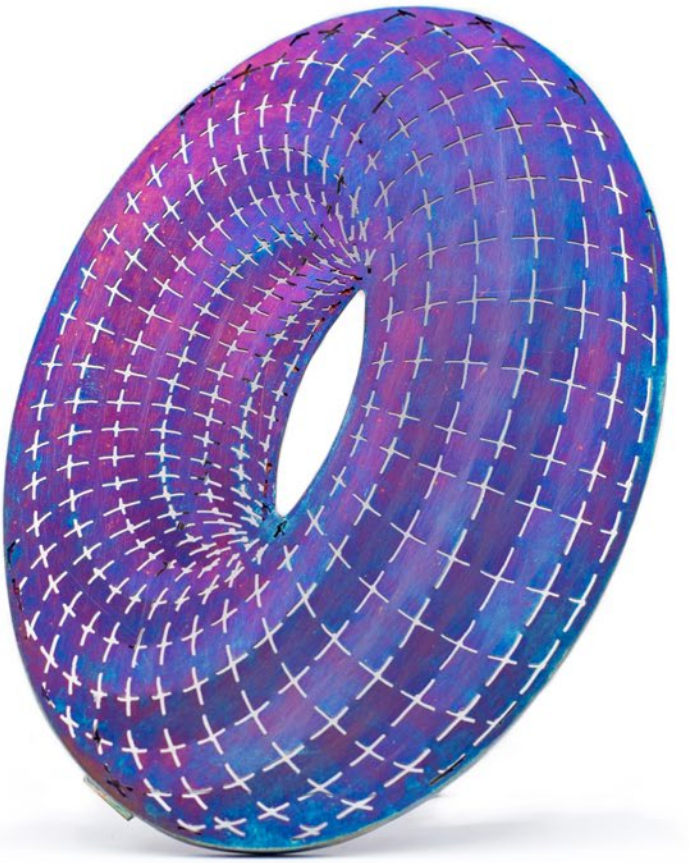


In her book, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection,* Susan Stewart describes a secret world that reveals itself when one engages with the miniature: "This is the daydream of the microscope: the daydream of life inside life, of significance multiplied infinitely *within* significance."[1] Small constructed worlds offer the potential for escape: they are frozen in time, separate from real life. Stewart explains that in the daydream world of the miniature, there is a finite amount of space, but an infinite amount of time.

Jewelers understand this phenomenon all too well. The OptiVISOR, akin to a horse blinder, blurs all but the task at hand as everything else slips away. The jeweler becomes absorbed by their own tiny world, where they hold complete supervision and control. Many metalsmiths live for this mental state in which they lose sense of space and time. This is flow. The term, coined by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in his book *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, is described as a period of extreme concentration and absorption.

Many of us have struggled to find reprieve from a parade of anxieties, unknowns, and tragedies during the pandemic. I became interested in flow as a means of escape. For those who can attain it, the flow state appears to be a respite from difficult times. I envy makers who can reliably achieve flow in their practice, rendering them efficient or prolific. They seem to transcend existential dread and get the most out of their time.

My brain has set conditions for achieving flow-state. Flow can occur when I've researched my subject to confusion, overthought and scaled down to tangibility, conducted material tests, workshopped difficult decisions, and planned my piece. I must also be excited about getting to work, my studio must be clean, and the sun must be in Capricorn. I'm kidding about the last one. Though it is the most enjoyable and confident state of my practice, flow doesn't happen often for me.



Xinia Guan
Flatland II (brooch), 2020
Oxidized sterling silver, stainless steel
7 x 5 x 1 cm
Photo courtesy of the artist

Opposite:
Xinia Guan
Capture VII (brooch), 2021
Oxidized sterling silver, 23k gold, stainless steel
8½ x 8½ x 1½ cm
Photo courtesy of the artist

Previous spread:
Xinia Guan
Flow I, 2020
Sterling silver, 18k gold, stainless steel
7½x 7½ x 1 cm
Photo courtesy of the artist

According to Csikszentmihalyi, one condition of achieving flow is attaining balance between challenge and skill.[2] The task must be adequately ambitious to foster the individual's engagement, yet not so challenging to cause frustration. To perpetuate flow, one must develop new or more challenging skills over time, finding that sweet spot just a hair beyond their proficiency. Continuously seeking small challenges improves one's technical abilities over time. By that logic, flow is ubiquitous in the jewelry world, as there are innumerable metalwork techniques to learn and not enough time to master them all. Metalsmiths are primed to achieve flow through years of technical discipline, engaging with small details, and performing repetitive tasks.

To understand flow from a metalsmith's perspective, I sent out a questionnaire. Of the fifty-eight metalsmiths and jewelers questioned, about 95 percent had experienced flow, with 50 percent claiming to experience it several times per week. Most respondents described it as blissfully losing track of time; a feeling of serenity, satisfaction, and renewal, just as one might characterize meditation.

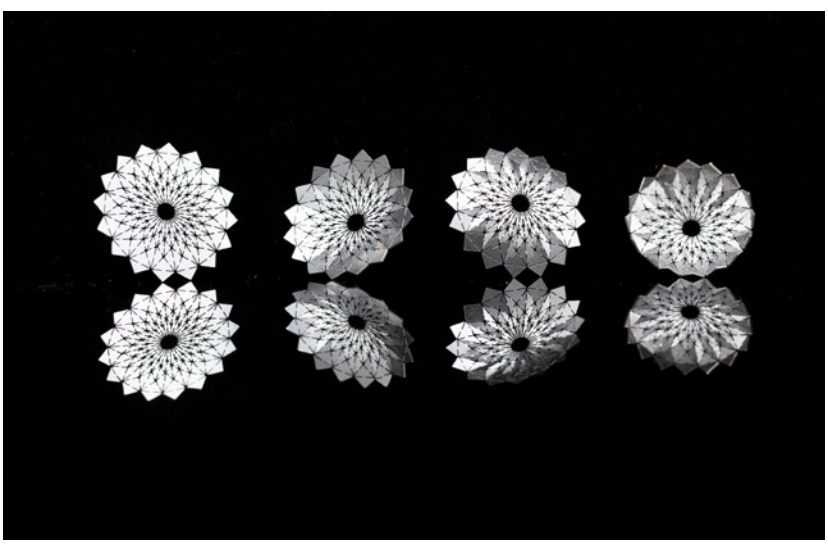
"My mind is peaceful; my heart is maintaining the same pace—I don't need to think too much about it," says jeweler Xinia Guan. Guan, originally from Inner Mongolia, China, spoke to me from her new apartment in Chicago. Her introspective and philosophical constitution carries into her work, which is composed of intricately pierced and bent geometric patterns. Guan describes her jewelry as a recording device, first of the hundreds of hours of fabrication in each pierced line, but also of sounds, emotions, and surroundings in its sieve-like quality and reference to apertures, speakers, and mandalas. Guan agrees that balance between challenge and skill is important for productive studio time. To maintain her engagement, she continues to follow her practiced formula of intricate piercing to explore more ambitious forms and patterns over time. *Flatland II*, a pierced and folded donut-shape, was named after the 1884 satirical novella *Flatland: A Romance of Many*

Right:
Xinia Guan in her studio, Evanston, Illinois

Photo: Miya Gong

Below:
Work in progress

Photo courtesy of the artist



Right:
Folding process of *Infinity* series, demonstrating how the pattern transfers from flat to formed.

Xinia Guan
Infinity series, 2021
Sterling silver
34 x 34 x 10 mm
Photo courtesy of the artist

Above right:
Process image of the *Infinity* series.

Photo: Miya Gong

The world we can see is based on the objective existence of 3D, but the world we can imagine should be far greater than these dimensions.

Time, as the fourth ruler, allows us with creative hands to widen the *boundaries*.

Dimensions by Edwin Abbott Abbott. This book is one of Guan's main influences, and inspired her to build complex structures by experimenting with the process of moving from 2D to 3D through the construction and deconstruction of her pierced geometric patterns. "The world we can see is based on the objective existence of 3D, but the world we can imagine should be far greater than these dimensions. Time, as the fourth ruler, allows us with creative hands to widen the boundaries," Guan says.

These surveyed artists agree that flow-state feels incredibly satisfying, both emotionally and physically. The spiritual and material rewards incentivize the maker to remain engaged, and thus motivate them to continue working.[3] "It's already in me," says the artist Castro, who lives in Istanbul, Turkey. "When it surfaces, I'm gonna be fully into it. Most of the time I don't think about it because it's just there." Castro brings his internal dream world to life through whimsical, fully articulated, and opulent gem-encrusted figures. He has come a long way from the wire-wrapped antiques of his early career. As a self-taught metalsmith, he decisively masters new skills to satisfy his ambitious ideals and visions, further perpetuating flow. *Money Brooch*, a catlike figure in emeralds set in 18 karat gold, exhibits Castro's ability to fabricate with the refinement of fine jewelry without the stuffiness: cats with pierced ears and floppy legs composed of the most extravagant materials on earth.

While some artists, like me, had a laundry list of conditions for reaching their flow, such as muting distractions or cleaning their workspace, others simply stated, "I sit at my bench." However, it can take years of cycling through work, feedback, and reward to get to that immediacy. "We have to train ourselves to get to that place," says Jolynn Santiago, who lives and works in Baltimore. Santiago's engaged and curious disposition is embodied within her work, and she invites her viewers to investigate the secretive and subtle details she has meticulously labored over. *Testimony*, which appears to be a raw silver sheet, upon closer inspection reveals

Castro
Money Brooch, 2021
Emeralds, bronze, 18k yellow gold
2½ in.
Photo: Onur Duncular

Scientists have found that people engaged in *flow* have a better capacity to evade reflexive self-consciousness and experience fewer negative emotions.

miniature granules of sterling silver. These granules were created from Santiago's meditative and formulaic process of filing, and have been comprehensively sifted and fused together. Santiago embraces imperfection in a controlled way; she explores the silver's response to manipulation by highlighting a crack that occurred during the fabrication process. Her work is simultaneously restrained and intuitive.

Self-professed control freaks—me included—can attest that working with metal generally requires control: a steady hand, an understanding of the material, and great attention to detail. According to "EEG Correlates of the Flow State...," flow causes increased activity in the inferior frontal gyrus and putamen.[4] These parts of the brain work to provide the maker with a deeper sense of cognitive control and positive reinforcement.[5] Within an increasingly turbulent reality, the work, which can be manipulated at will, feels much more comfortable.

To tap into a flow state, the task should also be pleasurable. An activity that is inherently enjoyable is considered an autotelic activity.[6] My interviews with Guan, Castro, Santiago, and others suggest that process-oriented makers are more likely to achieve flow regularly. The techniques they enjoy the most are the root of their artistic practice or concept. These processes likely have autotelic significance, such as Guan's hand piercing techniques. "Sawing is meditation for me," she says.

Other more elusive factors, such as self-confidence, passion, and compulsion, can also be crucial in achieving an autotelic activity cadence. For some, it is not enough simply to *want* to do the activity; it needs to be worth doing. For Castro, self-doubt is a nonstarter. "Making is a relationship with your piece. Even if it is rocky and you messed up, you have to see the end," he says. Each of his jewelry pieces requires a copious amount of time to create, as well as extremely expensive materials, so commitment is important.

The conception of *Just Grin and Bear it* is an example of Castro's internal drive to create despite obstacles. It was completed by hand at home during pandemic lockdown. Without the tools and resources to fabricate as he normally would, he adopted an inventive approach by creating his own stone-setting tools, and shaped sewing needles by stove to achieve small facial details. "If there's no struggle, it doesn't always feel worth it," Castro says.

The benefits of a flow state go beyond task completion. Scientists have found that people engaged in flow have a better capacity to evade reflexive self-consciousness and experience fewer negative emotions.[7] Because tasks which induce a flow state

Castro in his studio in Istanbul, Turkey

Photo courtesy of the artist

Castro
Falcon Crest, 2021
18K yellow gold, sterling silver, diamond, brown diamond, cultured pearl, enamel, emerald, ruby
4 x 5 in.
Photo: Onur Duncular

Jolynn Santiago in her studio during the creation of *twenty-four hours of silence (56 grams)*.

Photo: Michael Mauney

Jolynn Santiago
file, pause, sort (one pound): file (detail), 2020–2021
Sterling silver
11½ x 11½ x ¼ in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

require a high level of concentration, the mind can lose track of bodily awareness.[8] Furthermore, the prefrontal cortex's executive functions, which process the past and future, are inhibited during flow,[2] ostensibly allowing the maker to reach a sort of mindfulness free of the insecurities and negative thoughts that can impede one's practice.

Santiago's performance and the object, *Twenty-four hours of silence*, began as "an impulse that I had, and I wanted to run with it," she says. "At the time, I didn't know why." The project entailed filing a large rod of silver for twenty-four hours without eating, sleeping, talking, or any connection to the outside world. "Through hours and hours of filing I'm sitting with my thoughts, and I feel like it's something that we don't like to do.... It's a process of being okay with where I am, and what I'm thinking," she says.

Flow is not only an escape, but a commitment to what is in front of you. Through these interviews I learned that flow does not have to be a disassociation from the world, but rather a deeper connection to the material, the work, and the self. It emphasizes the journey—through process and engagement—over the outcome. It is a way to dismiss the ego and outside biases while suspending time and expectation. The practices of Castro, Guan, and Santiago are compelling examples of the journey's significance.

What I had assumed was a magic state of spiritual enlightenment and efficiency isn't magic at all. Flow is a result of dedicated and engaged work, an ease with

Flow is a result of dedicated and engaged work, an *ease* with oneself and with solitude, and an acceptance of the time it takes to get there.

Jolynn Santiago
testimony (almost two), 2020
from the series *twenty-four hours of silence (56 grams)*
Sterling silver
1½ x 2 x ⅛ in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

oneself and with solitude, and an acceptance of the time it takes to get there.

My fear of wasting time led me to perceive flow as a quick-fix method of cheating it. Rather, it is the acceptance of time that allows one to truly be engaged in their practice. Castro, Guan, and Santiago acknowledge that the pursuit of creating something handmade is rarely practical within the terms of capitalism. Flow is a satisfying bonus to regular studio life, not a capitalist tool to increase output.

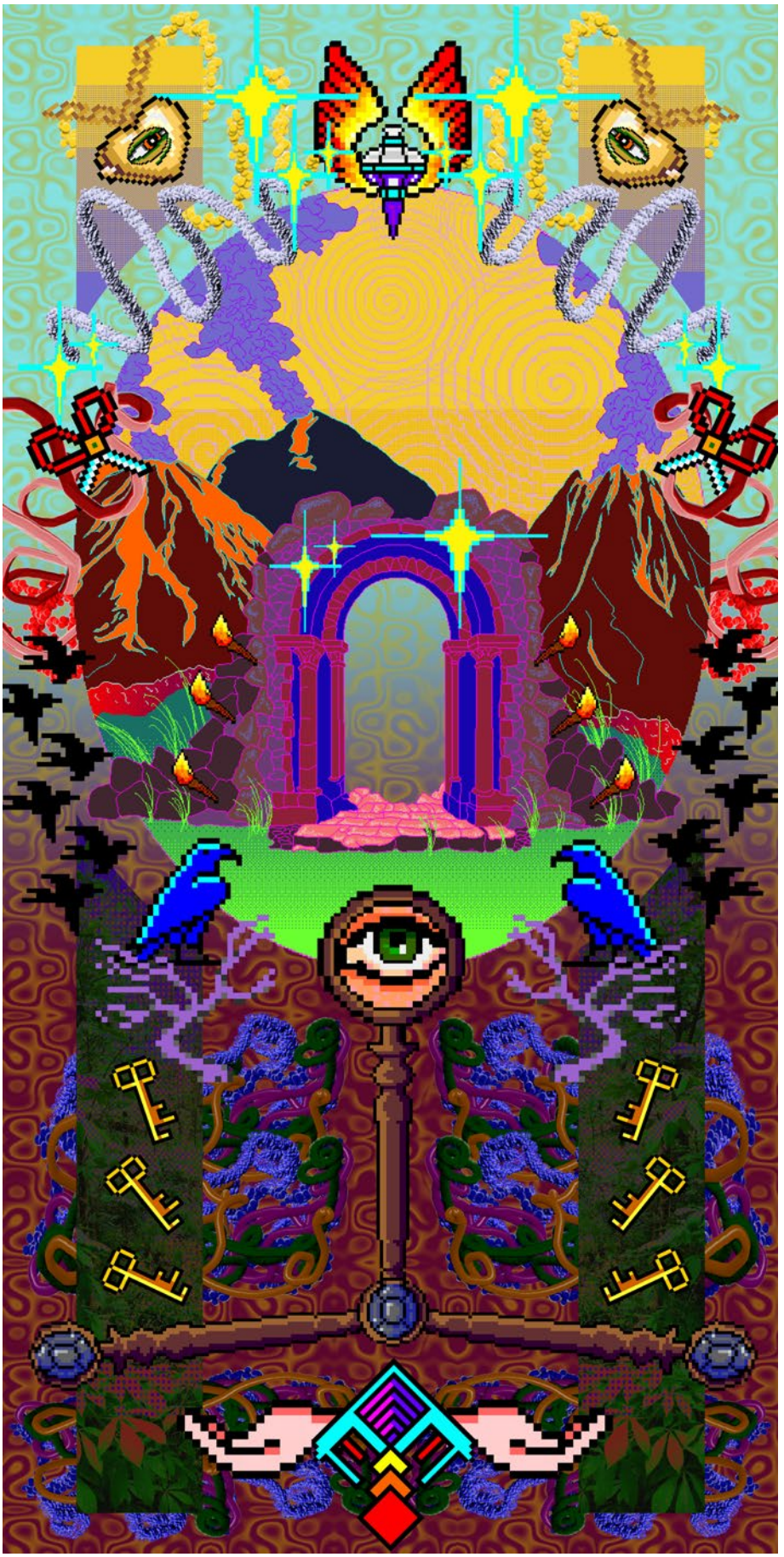
Modern society somehow both under- and overvalues our time. Social media and twenty-four-hour news cycles consume swaths of our day. Meanwhile, we are repeatedly reminded that time is money, and should not be wasted. In my practice, I have felt stuck in this conundrum.

Flow welcomes this contradiction, simultaneously suspending time and embracing its passage. It redefines efficiency as a practice in intention rather than expectation. The work can serve as a tangible souvenir of those investments, such as Guan's piece *Flow 1*. "Time is just a concept," she says, "so how we feel about it determines how it stands in our life."

"I don't think, as an artist, there's ever an end," says Castro. "We are searching for infinity."

Though flow may be an elusive state for some, at the heart of these interviews is an emphasis on the creative practice. Process is where the art lives. Choosing to spend time on a creative task can be an act of rebellion, an assertion of one's agency in a system based on the principles of efficiency and profit. Engagement in process reinforces a deeper connection to the self, the material, and centuries of makers before us. It's proof that this work is valuable and craft is indeed special.

1 Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives on the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992), 54. / **2** Katahira Kenji, Yamazaki Yoichi, Yamaoka Chiaki, Ozaki Hiroaki, Nakagawa Sayaka, and Nagata Noriko, "EEG Correlates of the Flow State: A Combination of Increased Frontal Theta and Moderate Frontocentral Alpha Rhythm in the Mental Arithmetic Task," *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 9 (September 2018): 2, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00300. / **3** Ibid, 2. / **4** Ibid, 4. / **5** Joshua Gold and Joseph Ciorciari, "A Review on the Role of the Neuroscience of Flow States in the Modern World," *Behavioral Sciences* 10, no. 9 (September 2020): 137, https://doi.org/10.3390/bs10090137. / **6** Paolo Inghilleri, Giuseppe Riva, and Eleonora Riva, eds., *Enabling Positive Change: Flow and Complexity in Daily Experience* (De Gruyter Open, 2015), 80. / **7** Kenji, et al., 10. / **8** Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, "Flow, the Secret to Happiness," filmed February 2004 at *TED2004* video, 18:24, https://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_flow_the_secret_to_happiness.



Altered States

By María-Elisa Heg

Lisa Falzon
Hello Earthling, 2021
Mixed metal, painted enamel on copper,
boulder opal, amber, filigree
3½ x 2¾ in.
Private collection
Photo courtesy of the artist

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

When English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge awoke from an uneasy sleep one morning in 1797, he was consumed by a dream. What he put down on paper ultimately became *Kubla Khan*, one of the best-known poems in the English language. After taking two grams of opium prescribed as a cure for what he described as "a dysentery," Coleridge fell asleep reading Samuel Purchas's 1625 *Purchas his Pilgrimage*.[1] The book describes the Mongol ruler Kublai Khan's "stately palace" at Xanadu.

From its mystic landscape to the solidly miraculous pleasure dome, Coleridge's poem retains its magnetic power more than two centuries later. But one need not ingest the milk of the poppy flower to pull the veil back on reality. For thousands of years, artists have used their craft to tap into the divine, the infernal, and the unknowable. I sat down with three such artists, who use their prodigious talents to conduct and bend our imaginative energies towards places that cannot be physically accessed.

A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!

Maltese artist Lisa Falzon has been creating metal jewelry under the moniker Bring Me My Battleaxe since 2017. After a decade running an illustration and design business, Falzon found a silversmithing studio near her home and signed up for a class. She was instantly smitten, and after discovering vitreous enamel in 2019, set about acquiring the equipment she needed to pursue the craft. Falzon found her voice in enamel after her work featuring a UFO garnered attention (and copycats) online. The large, whimsical *Hello Earthling* pendant (2021) combines Falzon's illustrative voice with the luxurious adornment and settings. "The person who bought it told me that she thought that piece was for her," says Falzon. "Ten years ago, she was driving on the highway, and suddenly, during the middle of the day, an enormous UFO went over her car. She saw an alien in the window, or a figure, and they waved at her. They were saying hello!"

The handpainted figure—a rosy-cheeked, doll-like alien with a charmingly floppy helmet—looks out at us with a wistful, slightly playful expression. Under a swirling shield of blue vitreous enamel studded with flowers, this little alien travels through space and time at the whim of the wearer.

Lisa Falzon
Catasterism, 2020
Mixed metal, cloisonné enamel
2 x 3 in.
Private collection
Photo courtesy of the artist

Lisa Falzon
The Crack Is How The Light Gets In, 2020
Mixed metal, cloisonné enamel
2½ x 2½ in.
Private collection
Photo courtesy of the artist

Previous spread:
Lauren Eckert
The Plane of Mystic and Material Memories, 2020
Digital collage on matte paper
46 x 38 in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

Embedded in the piece that you've created is a bit of the random chaos of fire.

Lisa Falzon
Portal, 2021
Tombac, cloisonné enamel, carnelian, labradorite
2¾ x 2¾ in.
Private collection
Photo courtesy of the artist

Falzon spends years developing many of her images as sketches. They tickle the subconscious through a blend of the familiar and the strange. The hypnotic, frightening imagery of *Catasterism* (2020) is a reference to *katasterismós*, a type of legend in which a mythological hero is honored forever by being transformed into a star. Falzon's version captures this climactic moment in the fullness of its beauty and terror: a charred human figure cranes their neck to behold a shining constellation of stars. As their soul ascends, their body is consumed by a tower of flame. Falzon's fascination with the precise moment of transformation is also evident in pieces like *Ecdysis of the Snake* (2020), which features a red and black snake on the verge of wriggling out of its skin. The stylized gold triangles of the snake's eyes give it a talismanic quality, and its form radiates a diffuse golden aura. Fired in stages in a kiln to refine and unify their component materials, *Catasterism* and *Ecdysis* play up the allegorical qualities of vitreous enamelwork. This gives them a mystical, even alchemic quality.

Falzon admits to a personal connection with alchemy, the ancient art of refining and transmuting matter in pursuit of material and spiritual perfection. She describes her father as a man who "fit the archetype of both the hermit and the alchemist" and was an avid experimenter all through her childhood. Although Falzon she maintains she is not a spiritual person, her attraction to the esoteric and unknowable can be seen in her day-to-day life. During our Zoom interview, she introduced me to her little black dog Madini, named for an angel who visited famed sixteenth-century alchemist John Dee. Her kiln is nicknamed Demon Lover in homage to Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*. Falzon's fascination with the poem is manifested in pieces like *Mount Abora* (2021), which the poem refers to as a vision conjured by the song of "a damsel with a dulcimer"—a dream within a dream. The refraction of the blue and purple enamel through the textured glass is Falzon's nod to the song of the damsel, which can only be imagined—never known.

Pieces like *Portal* (2021) and *The Crack Is How The Light Gets In* (2020) also use vivid colors and eye-catching patterns to offer the promise of transcendence to their wearers—*Portal*'s burning bush waits on the other side of a gold-rimmed portal, at the end of a shining path. *The Crack Is How The Light Gets In* captures the other side of grief and trauma in the form of a planet beaming a vivid rainbow from its damaged surface. "To me, cloisonné has obvious links to alchemy," says Falzon. "When you put something in [the kiln], it's like you're making a spell because you add the ingredients, but the last bit of magic happens in the kiln. Embedded in the piece that you've created is a bit of the random chaos of fire."

Lisa Falzon
Ecdysis of the Snake, 2020
Mixed metal, cloisonné enamel
1¼ x 2¾ in.
Private collection
Photo courtesy of the artist

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

Some makers, like Falzon, capture the ephemeral and illusory qualities of alternate realms—she is drawn to the unknowability of Mount Abora. Other artists wish to provide extensive material descriptions that ground their fantasy worlds in a palpable reality: What would the pleasure dome look like inside? Specific artifacts and details of the world accrete to give the viewer the impression of a robust material culture that extends beyond the bounds of the work itself. Philadelphia-based metalsmith and illustrator Lauren Eckert brings a maker's sensibility to this practice of worldbuilding, physically crafting the objects that furnish an expansive fantasy universe of her own making.

Inspired by the hallucinatory paintings of fifteenth-century Dutch painter Hieronymus Bosch, Eckert also draws on a childhood spent in the heyday of pixelated video games, particularly the *Castlevania series,* which draws from the well of late Medieval and Baroque imagery to tell a tale of epic struggle between humans and vampires. *The Plane of Mystic and Material Memories* (2020) merges these visual sensibilities, presenting a medieval triptych with the decidedly Y2K flair of Kid Pix, a pixel-based imaging software from the early 2000s.

Eckert describes pieces like her *Synthetic Relic* (2020) series as "hypothetical things," objects that act as plot points in a story still being written. Suspended by heavy chains from beastlike claws, each piece feels like it was plucked from the throne room of some far-flung planetary stronghold. What coordinates are depicted on the anodized surfaces of *Synthetic Relic 3*? From whose divine or infernal frame does the harnesslike *Synthetic Relic* hang? What strange creature's purple paws grasp the chains, and what destiny awaits the one who would take these relics for themselves?

Lauren Eckert
Synthetic Relic 3, 2020
Steel, titanium,
3D printed nylon
9 x 9 x 30 in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

Above:
Lauren Eckert
Woven Pixels 2, 2020
Steel, titanium
6 x 4¼ x ¼ in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

Lauren Eckert
Synthetic Relic, 2020
Steel, titanium, 3D printed nylon
36 x 14 x 4½ in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

Right:
Lauren Eckert
The Plane of Mystic and Material Memories (detail), 2020
Digital collage on matte paper
46 x 38 in.
Photo courtesy of the artist

Extruded from a mysterious universe into our own, Eckert's works are tantalizing artifacts from a distant past, or a future that has not yet come to pass.

"I like to leave room for interpretation," Eckert says of her narrative worldbuilding process. "The mystery of it is one of the things that's intriguing to me." Accordingly, she takes an improvisational approach to planning her pieces, finalizing many design concepts at the bench. Where writers can dictate the physics of their fictitious worlds at will, Eckert must contend with the question of how an imaginary object will be rendered in real life. Unexpected outcomes are embraced and incorporated into her narrative, which is fleshed out and expanded upon object by object.

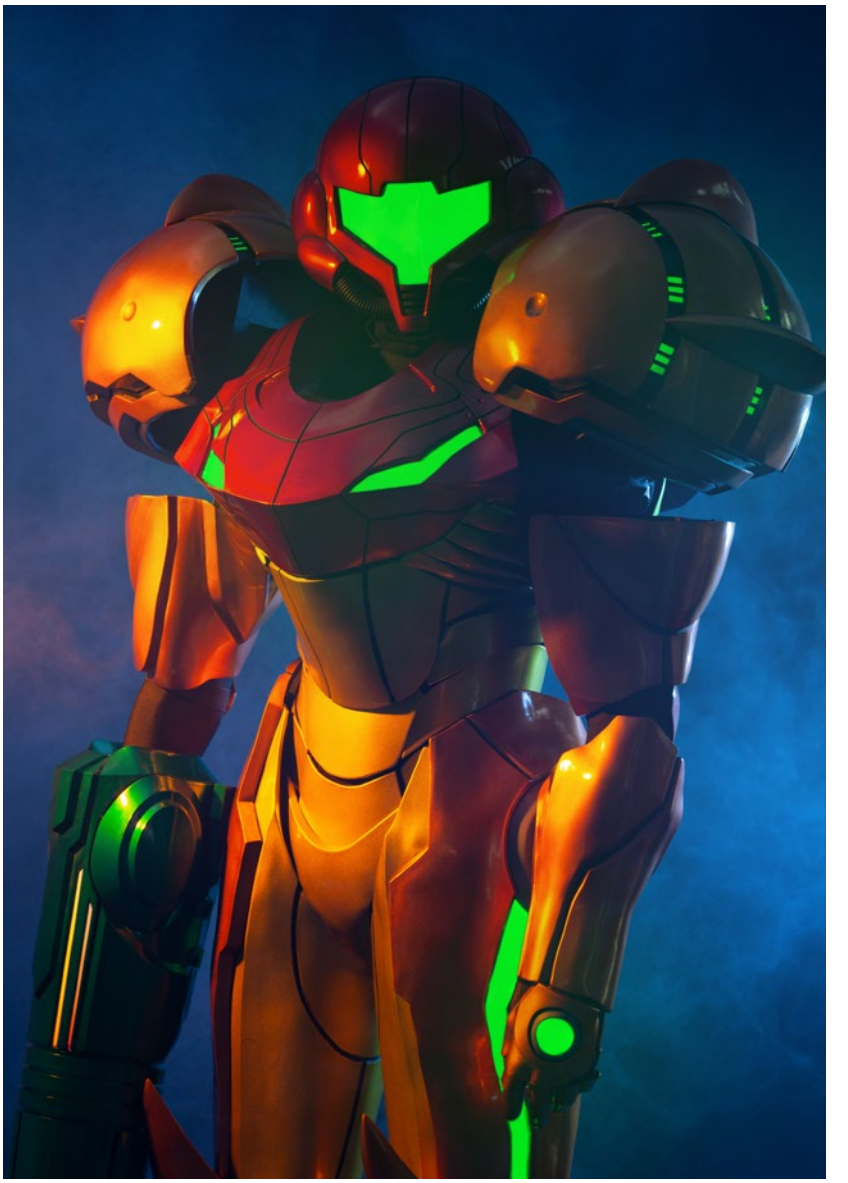
For Eckert, the act of bringing a hypothetical object into reality has taken on a metaphysical quality. As she transforms her ideas into physical objects, she is interested in the overlap of craft as a ritual practice as well as a creative one: "Thinking of the object, before it is material, it can be anything. Any iteration of possibility. When you're dreaming it up. Bringing it into reality, negotiating with the material: that is when my alternate self comes into contact with my real self," she says. Extruded from a mysterious universe into our own, Eckert's works are tantalizing artifacts from a distant past, or a future that has not yet come to pass.

His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

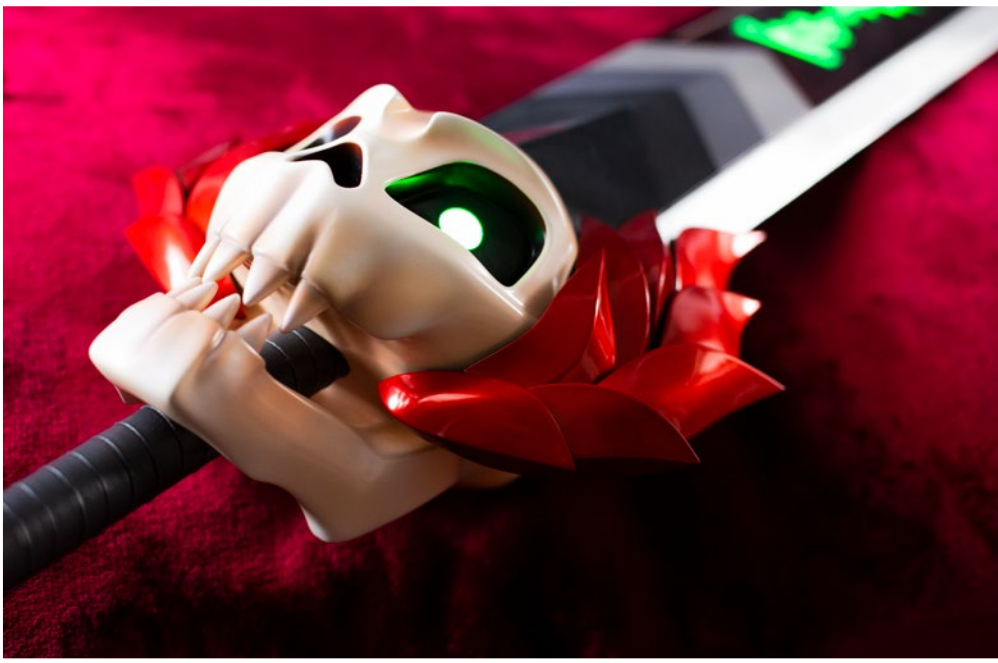
What we choose to wear has a profound effect on our self-perception and confidence. Even in mundane contexts, our clothing impacts our psychology. Group celebrations like Mardi Gras prominently feature elaborate costumes and masks, greasing the wheels for unbridled revelry and a departure from normal behavioral expectations. When we dress extravagantly, we tend to act accordingly—a fact that has long been embraced by those in the uniquely immersive costuming practice known as cosplay.

A portmanteau of "costume play," cosplay is the practice of making and wearing the outfits of characters from beloved movies, shows, books, and games. It has been a part of sci-fi and fan culture since Myrtle Rebecca "*Morojo*" Douglas Smith Gray Nolan first donned what she called a "futuristicostume" at the 1939 World Science Fiction Convention in New York.[2] Since then, the practice has exploded globally, with international competitions garnering makers fame and adulation for their skills. Xephyr is one of the brightest stars in the firmament of this diverse community. Their eponymous Houston-based studio's meticulously engineered costume builds have won multiple awards.

Although they first discovered cosplay in high school, it wasn't until after college that Xephyr found their love of costume and prop making. Inspired by the sinister villain from the video game *Majora's Mask*, Xephyr sculpted a mask out of polymer clay and went to their first convention. The experience was life-changing. "The reception of the cosplay community was just so incredible," they recall.



Xephyr Studios
Samus (detail, left), 2018
Foamed PVC sheet, epoxy clay, acrylic sheet, LED lights
100 x 75 x 198 cm
Photo: Andy Campos
Courtesy of the artist



When you're in costume, you're not you anymore exactly. This sense of not being yourself at the moment is very freeing.

Xephyr Studios
Stygian Blade, 2021
PLA plastic, acrylic sheet, resin, LED lights
8 x 15 x 123 cm
Photo: Lutavia Cosplay
Courtesy of the artist

Opposite:
Xephyr Studios
Moira, 2020
PLA plastic, EVA foam, resin, fabric, LED lights
89 x 41 x 177 cm
Photo: Casey Achgill
Courtesy of the artist

Their next project was the slick, futuristic armor worn by Samus Aran in the video game series *Metroid*. They heated and hand-shaped thermoplastic to form the suit, a laborious process they describe as awful. "Took me two years to finish it," they lament. Over the years, they have returned to the project numerous times, recreating elements like Samus's arm cannon using a 3D printer and outfitting the suit with LED lights. A trained engineer turned professional costume and prop maker, Xephyr uses each build to expand their skill set and find new ways of working with materials. "I'm better with process creativity than I am with actual raw design creativity," they say.

Xephyr starts each project with a clear goal in mind, like the glowing biotic armor of Moira O'Deorain from *Overwatch* or the skull-hilted Stygian blade from *Hades*. "I like to try to pick things that are on the edge of what's doable or simulated," they say, "especially things that have a lot of lights or glowy magic stuff." Designs percolate for months as Xephyr mentally dissects each layer of a complex build before entering the design phase. Reverse engineering designs from the unreal physics of video games, they approach designing each piece as "a holistic process—if it's too far out, you have to add the ergonomics in while you're doing the aesthetic construction." Each build is a careful balance between wearability and faithfulness to the original design.

Falling somewhere between method acting and displaying a work of art on the body, cosplay gives participants the opportunity to embody characters that speak to them on a personal level. Samus Aran's early depiction as a silent, helmeted hero in *Metroid Prime* left plenty of room for the young Xephyr to "self-insert" as the game's protagonist and enjoy a more immersive gameplay experience. Similarly, Moira's intriguing backstory and androgynous appearance appealed to Xephyr, who is nonbinary. "When you're in costume, you're not you anymore exactly," they say. "This sense of not being yourself at the moment is very freeing." With big strides in recent years towards inclusivity in the cosplay community, conventions are increasingly seen as safe spaces to explore self-expression. "I get permission to show off I guess," they say with a laugh. "One doesn't feel one has permission to do that in most of daily life."

■ For each of these artists, the act of making is a visionary exercise. To wrest from the ether objects with the intoxicating power of fantasy is a powerful act. It in some ways subverts our daily existence, which demands that so much that we find intolerable must be accepted as unchangeable. These artists present an alternative, one that empowers and encourages us to see beyond the veil of our own routines and assumptions. What worlds might we forge if we took inspiration from their examples?

1 "Purchas His Pilgrimage; or, Relations of the World and the Religions," British Library. https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/purchas-his-pilgrimage-or-relations-of-the-world-and-the-religions. /
2 Jennifer Culp, "Meet the Woman Who Invented Cosplay," *Racked*, May 9, 2016, https://www.racked.com/2016/5/9/11451408/cosplay-inventor-morojo-myrtle-r-douglas.

Lou Lynn

A Craft Maestro

By D Wood

"More and more I wonder to what extent the place where I live influences what I make."

–Lou Lynn

Top:
Lou Lynn's studio in West Kootenay, British Columbia, Canada

Photo courtesy of Lou Lynn

Each year, the Canada Council for the Arts (CCA) bestows a monetary prize and medallion upon a distinguished Canadian craftsperson. The Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts—the Saidye Bronfman Award—is given to artists and artisans who have made a significant contribution to the field. It is the only award that honors fine craft in the country.[1]

Candidates must be nominated by an arts professional, senior academic, private art dealer, art critic, or curator, and the jury is composed of a panel of prominent craftspeople. In other words, the laurel is recognition by one's peers. In 2021 Lou Lynn became the 45th winner of the Saidye Bronfman Award.

Six glass artists have received the honor in the past, and while Lynn has been recognized in glass journals, she is described by the CCA as a visual artist. Her notable work combining glass and bronze, uniting fragile with tough, as well as her teaching, publishing, and community service, make Lynn a worthy recipient of the award.

Overture

Lynn lives near the Rocky Mountains of British Columbia, in a region called West Kootenay. As the crow flies, her home and studio are halfway between Vancouver and Calgary, Alberta, but a trip to either city requires a circuitous negotiation of two-lane highways. In the winter, Lynn rises early, shovels snow from the path to her studio, lights a fire in the wood stove, and returns to the house for breakfast. In summer, she may have to leave the property because of forest fires: in 2021, the nearby Trozzo Creek fire, covering 742 hectares, required Lynn to move 16 crates of sculpture to a safe location and stay with friends for a week.

Do these circumstances affect her work? Lynn says, "I used to resist this idea, but more and more I wonder to what extent the place where I live influences what I make. Initially I would suggest that I would be making the same work in downtown Toronto as I do living where I live." She concedes that the property she shares with her partner, Joel Russ, requires chores like clearing brush and trimming foliage, which align with the process of handcraft. And her 2020 triptych, *Shovels*, bears witness to this connection. "I went to the sheds on our property and found sixteen different shovels. They all have slightly different purposes, or are broken, etc.," Lynn says. I

Previous spread, left:
Buttons and Fasteners, 2014–2016
Bronze, steel
Various dimensions
Photo: Janet Dwyer

Previous spread, right:
Sharpener, 2018
Glass, bronze, steel
12 x 8 x 8 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer

Shovels (triptych), 2018
Glass, bronze, steel
42 x 62 x 19 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer

would contend that there are few sheds in Toronto that contain sixteen shovels and a broken one would go out in the weekly trash. Thus, the influence of place is worth exploring further. In the meantime, Lynn's description of where she took the notion of shovel gives an idea of her design inspiration, which she calls "the archaeology of daily life."

In the case of *Shovels,* Lynn says, "I began to see how this tool varies to dig a post-hole or something else. And it can alter over time. So I basically take a look at what's been done before and interpret, in my own way, what a shovel might be." *Shovel #1* looks orthodox, except for its glass shaft that is a ready-made 1 ½-inch diameter glass rod. The bronze handle and socket are near normal in size, but the blade's missing corner leaves the viewer wondering. The brain reads it as shovel, yet it confounds because of its lack of utility: Would the fragile shaft withstand force? Would it break if tossed to the ground? Why the weird blade?

Lynn has accumulated a range of common hand tools that are her inspiration. Extrapolating from utensils in the kitchen, workshop, laundry, sewing room, and shed, she develops exquisite non-utensils.

Lynn causes further perturbation with *Shovel #2* and *#3*, with their unfamiliar blades. What purpose do they serve? Are they replicas of ancient implements? These tools challenge utility; their only function is to express creativity, celebrate form and material, and contribute harmony and beauty to the world.

Instrumentation

Lynn grew up in Edmonton, Alberta, where she was exposed to clay in primary school. During high school she studied commercial art and attended adult night courses in clay where she explored its sculptural possibilities. The commercial art training transferred readily into her initial interest in stained glass, with its two-dimensionality and application of color. Lynn established a glass studio in 1973 and showed her stained glass at craft fairs, received commissions for private homes, and participated in a few exhibitions. In these pre-internet years, she eventually became aware of Pilchuck Glass School in Washington state. Her first Pilchuck class was architectural stained glass, taught by Ed Carpenter, assisted by Peter Mollica and Tim O'Neil. She says, "I saw things happening with glass that I never could have imagined. That made me re-examine what I was doing and the direction I wanted to go. Being exposed to all the various realms of working with glass at Pilchuck, I began to see that glass is more than two dimensions." She took a general class in cold working and then kiln-forming at the University of Hawaii. In total, she attended seven workshops at Pilchuck and was either a teaching assistant or faculty member there four times.

Lynn accrued techniques that allowed her to kiln-cast glass. She used wax to create forms and the lost-wax method of casting: a plaster and silica investment encases the wax form; the wax is burned out, and the cavity filled with molten glass; when cold, the investment is removed and the glass is cut and polished. She showed this work in western Canada where it caught the eye of Lloyd Herman, the founding director of the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Art Museum. He had moved to Vancouver, and offered Lynn her first solo glass exhibition (1986) at the newly founded Cartwright Gallery. This exposure at a significant venue enabled Lynn and Tom Lynn (no relation) to apply for a CCA grant to explore the possibilities of combining metal and glass.

Tom had a foundry and cast in aluminum, and while Lynn made a number of pieces with glass and aluminum, she was

concerned about the toxicity of the lost Styrofoam method which, when burnt out, emits a fine cyanide gas. Despite its drawbacks, Lynn says, "Once I saw the potential of what those two materials could do together—the metal and the glass, the fragility, the permanence—I began to think there was the potential to do something, yet I didn't know what." Over the years she experimented with various metals, and while teaching at the Kootenay School of the Arts in Nelson, BC, the instructors in the foundry suggested that she cast bronze with them. As Lynn notes, the rest is history.

Symphony

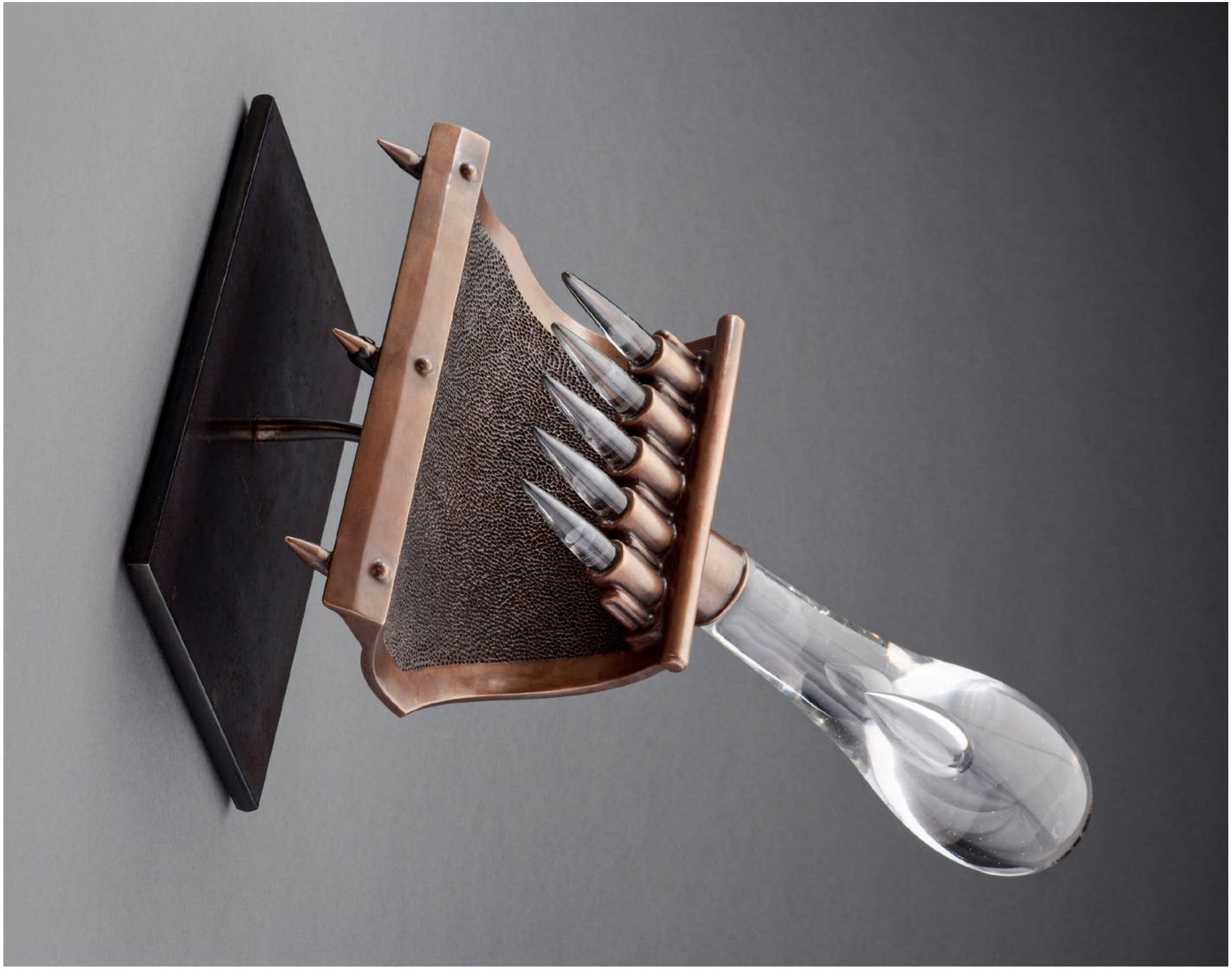
The combination of cast glass and cast bronze dominated Lynn's work until "casting became a frustrating process," she says. "At the time, the forms I was interested in had glass components that were very symmetrical, i.e., the handles of tools. That's a process that normally would have happened on a lathe." Today, the symmetrical glass forms are made by expert glass blowers to whom Lynn supplies drawings. She brings the blown forms to her studio to cold-work and fit them to the bronze components. Carved wax molds, sometimes built around the blown glass to ensure an appropriate fit, are taken to a foundry. The very rough bronze returns to Lynn's studio for polishing and patinas. Occasionally, wood is incorporated too.

While the bits and pieces are being crafted and assembled, Lynn hires a museum mount-maker to execute her vision of the object's display. She says, "I often think of myself as the conductor, with many skilled musicians out there." And

Standing Form, 2001
Cast glass
17 x 10 x 4 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer

Opposite:
Berry Scoop, 2012
Glass, bronze, steel mount
29 x 8 x 10 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer

Wheel, 1990
Cast aluminum, glass
12 x 26 x 15 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer



Tools As Artifacts (installation) (detail), 2008–2010
Glass, bronze
408 x 36 x 6 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer

this is where place arises again because those "musicians" are not resident in her village. The realization of Lynn's objects requires journeys to Vancouver, Calgary, and Nelson and is reliant on the schedules and idiosyncrasies of other craftspeople. In addition, an ice storm, mud slide, or pandemic can bring her craft practice to a halt.

Nevertheless, Lou Lynn's portfolio is extensive. She's a collector and has accumulated a range of common hand tools that are her inspiration. Extrapolating from utensils in the kitchen, workshop, laundry, sewing room, and shed, she develops exquisite non-utensils. Lynn reflects, "I wouldn't say there was a deeper meaning that I'm exploring. There's no message about what I'm doing. It's a search for form and expression and interpreting my ideas which come bit by bit." Yet a narrative *could* be imposed on the work.

Often in a small local history museum there will be a sign beside a displayed artifact that asks if the viewer can identify it. These objects once performed a vital function—apple peeling, meat grinding, trenching, candle making—that is now obsolete or done by machine. Lynn's tools are not replicas of these antiques, but she riffs on them, creating a "thing" that looks like its predecessor yet isn't. Not only does *Berry Scoop* have an impractical glass handle, it has a serrated edge that would pierce berries, making a juicy mess. Similarly, *Iron*, which recalls flat irons that were heated on a stove or had a chamber for heated coals, can't fulfill its function because the chamber is remote from the triangular base. These objects seem to subtly comment on lost technologies and, like the unidentified museum artifact, were necessary at the time but are absurd from our perspective.

Iron, 2017
Glass, bronze, steel
18 x 16 x 5 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer

The works in *Tools as Artifacts*, a series from 2008-2010, have handles, knobs, and heads that are familiar, but their business ends have unrecognizable uses. *Button Box* is reminiscent of a tin of odd buttons in a sewing basket. The bronze, wood, and glass forms replicate the originals while the sizes would suit a giant's clothes! The glass needle poking out of the central button is also from a fantasy tale.

One could speculate that Lynn's location in a wild, mysterious, and inaccessible terrain, and one that was inhabited by colonial pioneers as well as back-to-the-landers, was and is a place where making do with what is at hand means survival. Her enigmatic and ersatz DIY tools suit that idiosyncratic, challenging environment.

Wool Comb, 2016
Glass, bronze, steel
14 x 10.5 x 16 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer

Fasteners (installation), 2014–2016
Bronze, steel
42 x 432 x 6 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer

Drum Roll

Lynn's deep participation in her community contributed to her being chosen for the Saidye Bronfman Award. She taught design and professional practice at the Kootenay School of the Arts for thirteen years, which led to workshops on marketing art. She was invited by an economic development consultant to give sessions to Indigenous artists in Haida Gwaii[2] and prepared them for attending and showing work at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver. Her experience prompted her to write three books: *Make it to Market: Marketing Opportunities for Craft* (1999), *Marketing Pacific Northwest Coast Native Arts & Crafts* (2001) and *Marketing Guide for Fine Contemporary Craft in the U.S.* (2002). She has also been a board member and President of the BC Craft Council, served on the board of the Glass Art Association of Canada, acted as a provincial representative for the Canadian Craft Federation, and served as curator, coordinator, and consultant for exhibitions, juries, and programs.

Of winning the award, Lou Lynn says: "It's incredibly gratifying. The list of recipients is long with wonderful makers. It means that the work I've done over the course of my career, somebody noticed along the way. Because living where I live, I'm not always sure. I ask myself, does this matter to anybody else? I've been very fortunate to receive a number of grants and exhibitions so I know that people have noticed. This is definitely an accomplishment for me personally. Satisfaction." Yet when Lynn goes to Ottawa where the Governor-General will present the coveted medallion, she won't forget the metaphorical musicians: Janet Dwyer (photographer), Denis Kleine (metal caster), Julia Reimer (glass artist), Tyler Rock (glass artist), Joel Russ, Carl Schlicting (mountmaker), and a roster of other supporters. When she received news of the accolade, she told her husband, "We've just won the Bronfman." Acknowledging that "we" is another reason for her tribute.

1 Saidye Bronfman was the wife of Samuel Bronfman, the founder of the Seagram Company, a distiller of Canadian whiskey. Saidye was a philanthropist, active in Jewish communities, and a supporter of the arts and charities. / **2** Formerly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands, the area was officially renamed Haida Gwaii (Islands of the People) in 2010 to honor the Haida Nation who lived there for 14,000 years.

Button Box *is reminiscent of a tin of odd buttons in a sewing basket. The bronze, wood, and glass forms replicate the originals while the sizes would suit a giant's clothes! The glass needle poking out of the central button is also from a fantasy tale.*

Button Box, 2014
Glass, wood, metal
18 x 42 x 42 in.
Photo: Janet Dwyer

INNOVATIONS IN THE DIGITAL SPACE

BY LIZ STEINER

Arielle Brackett
Retired Stamps, 2019
Vinyl, thread, repurposed rubber stamps and brass
28 x 7½ x 5 in.
Photo: Michael Newsome

THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT the rise of social media and the accessibility of the internet has had a massive effect on the way artists promote, exhibit, and sell their work. The mid 2000s saw the launch of the call for entries website CaFÉ, as well as the now-massive craft sales site Etsy. Nearly two decades later, Instagram hashtags are often used to collect exhibition entries, such as the Chicago-based Gallery 2052's call for *Mad For Hoops* in both 2019 and 2020.

Virtual representations of physical exhibitions were not uncommon pre-pandemic, but with the arrival of COVID-19, every type of programming from lectures to workshops, fundraisers and entire conferences shifted to an online format, and "virtual" became the buzzword of the new pandemic era. The massive shutdown of in-person events, museums, and gallery spaces fast-tracked innovations in the ever-evolving digital space. The following is a brief look at some of earliest digital re-imaginings in response to the pandemic.

SPLOP DESIGN

Splop Design, an online gallery and retail website, was founded in 2020 by Yinqi Puffy Zhao and Kerry Yichen Guan in direct response to the pandemic. "Splop" is a 3D modeling term that allows makers to repeat, rotate, and resize an object while retaining its structure. Zhao and Guan directly reference these terms in their business model, aiming to "repeat" exposure of their artists, "rotate" viewpoints of customers from in person to virtual, "resize" the amount of people who can access the work, but "retain" the accuracy of the piece and the message of the artist.[1]

What sets Splop apart from similar sites such as Artful Home is its focus on emerging artists, students, recent graduates, and self-taught makers.[2] Splop handles everything from photography, quality control, sales, and shipping, so their artists can "focus on their making, not marketing." The model may be familiar, but the artists Splop represents provide the innovation.

Zhao states that if not for the pandemic shutdown, Splop may have taken another path altogether, focusing on an in-person experience, rather than virtual. It's too soon to tell whether the success of Splop will come from Zhao and Guan's less standard approach to a familiar model, or their eye for new talent, or what challenges they'll face in a post-pandemic world, when more is accessible face to face. Zhao states, "We are exploring all possibilities.... We are picturing Splop on a blank canvas, and perhaps the future will be colorful."

DANACA DESIGN
The Battle of the Rings

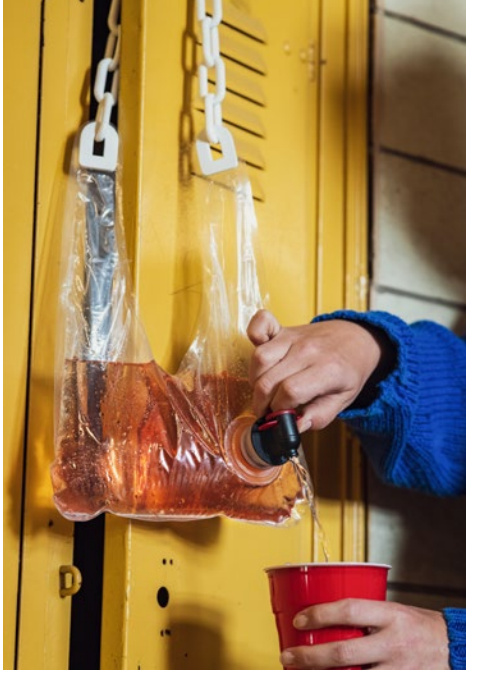
Perhaps one of the most difficult things to translate into a digital space is the sense of community we feel as makers. Danaca Design, a gallery and teaching studio in Seattle, was able to surmount this hurdle by appealing to our competitive nature. At the start of the pandemic, while brainstorming ways to lift spirits *and* stay in business, Dana Cassara developed the hugely popular *Battle of the Rings*: an online competition in which applicants submit photos of their rings, some of which are selected by a panel of jurors who then assigns selections to one of two teams: the Shanks or the Mandrels. Rings from each team are then pitted against one another in a bracket style tournament.[3] Anyone can vote for their favorite ring through a poll on Danaca Design's Instagram stories. Rings with the most votes progress to the next round until one ring remains.

The idea for *Battle of the Rings* is based on the virtual event *Mug Madness*, hosted by Saltstone Ceramics, but with a jewelry twist. Cassara states, "I chose rings because at the time I couldn't offer enough ring workshops to meet demand."[4] The response to *Battle of the Rings* was in Cassara's words, "staggering," with a 50 percent increase in entries from 2020 to 2021, and more sales from both exhibitions than all of the studio's past shows, with customers from all across the world. The competitions were held in June 2020 and May 2021, with the selected ring for sale though Danaca Design's website.

However, the most surprising aspect to Cassara was the connections made between artists. The Instagram poll format exposed artists to others they may not normally meet with a traditional exhibition format. Cassara stated that the "competition factor encouraged people to get excited and get vocal. The combination generated conversation and admiration. That's just not something that happens during a normal exhibition."

Battle of the Rings 2020
Gloved Hand (book cover)

Clockwise, starting with ring on thumb: Beth Novak, *Party Ring*; Nina Raizel Hartman, *Quarantine Ring*; Deborah Boskin, *Of Course it's a Diamond!*; Helen Cowart, *Orange Gumdrop*; Andrea Shavlik Polzkill, *Some Clouds Have a Gold Lining*; Kathleen Faulkner, *Apartment Complexity*. Photo: Dana Cassara



JV COLLECTIVE

Founding a virtual event is one thing, but transitioning an in-person exhibition to online midstream is something else. JV Collective of Philadelphia planned a juried exhibition, *In School Suspension,* in conjunction with the 2020 SNAG conference. The call was for necklaces and pendants that encapsulated the adolescent experience. Selected submissions would be displayed in the lockers of the JV Collective's studio, a converted vocational high school building in South Philadelphia. When the conference was canceled, the JV Collective faced scrapping the work they'd already done or finding an alternative.

Because the call for *In School Suspension* had already been published, the collective decided to focus their energies on a website and exhibition catalog.[5] It remained paramount that the images reflected "the atmosphere of the building" and that the photography still show the work "'in situ, where it was originally intended to be displayed."[6] JV Collective member Sarah Rachel Brown states, "It was important to us to elevate the virtual exhibition experience, and we knew the images were key to achieving this."[7] Fellow member Mallory Weston feels that the resulting photographs were more successful than the original plans for installing the work in lockers, and allowed them to utilize the entirety of the building.

While disappointed about missing out on the face-to-face connection provided by an in person event, the JV Collective is satisfied with how *In School Suspension* ultimately turned out. Rethinking the entire exhibition led to innovative documentation, a catalog, and even a video game.[8] JV Collective member Marie Eife feels that an in-person exhibition would have also been a success, but a more "fleeting" one. She says, "I am certain we would not have had the time to document [the show] as well as we did and would not have been able to share the exhibition as widely if it had been in person."

As things in the art world come in and out of "normalcy," we must hold on to the positive aspects of having to reimagine our world, and anticipate more innovations on how we connect in the digital space. Perhaps the integration of the digital and physical will become more seamless, giving rise to more hybrid events, where people can choose how they want to engage. Whether virtual or in person, artists will always find ways to share their work, and the more obstacles we face, the more creative we become.

Above, left to right:

James M Jencks
Chainsmoker, 2019
Brass, copper, sterling silver, powder coating, epoxy
5 x 5 in.
Photo: Linette Kielinski

Stefan Gougherty
BYOB, 2020
Rosé, modified box wine packaging, nylon chain
9 x 20 x 6 in.
Photo: Linette Kielinski

Katia Rabey
Begin Autopsy, 2020
Steel, plastic, german silver, powder coating, thread
13 x 10 x 1 cm
Photo: Linette Kielinski

1 https://www.splopdesign.com/business-statement. / **2** Yinqi Zhao, email interview with the author, October 2021. / **3** Dana Cassara, discussion with the author, October 2021. / **4** Ibid. / **5** Mallory Weston, discussion with the author, December 2021. / **6** Mallory Weston and Emily Cobb, discussion with the author, December 2021. / **7** Sarah Rachel Brown, discussion with the author, December 2021. / **8** Emily Cobb, discussion with the author, December 2021.

Conferences & Events

Cristina Celis
Trato Hecho Jamás Deshecho / Deal Done Never Undone (amulet for hand)
Inked ceramic, 24k gold leaf
3 x 4 x 3 cm
Photo courtesy of the artist

III Latin American Biennial of Contemporary Jewelry —Select Exhibitions

3.9.2022 - 8.28.2022
Various locations, Buenos Aires, Argentina

In 2021, the III Latin American Biennial of Contemporary Jewelry went online due to the pandemic. The event included a wide range of online lectures, workshops, competitions, and 25 exhibitions from Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina. In 2022, select exhibitions from the Biennial will be inaugurated in person between March and April: *Abran Cancha*, Museum of the History of the Costume, Buenos Aires, March 9–April 30; *Cabinet of Curiosities*, Museum of the History of the Costume, Buenos Aires, March 9–April 30; *Breathe, Think, Do: Four contemporary jewelers*, José Hernández Popular Art Museum, Buenos Aires, April 7–August 28; *From the studio, there is something that needs to be told*, Historic Museum Sarmiento, Buenos Aires, April 9–June 26.

www.labienal.ar
@joyeros argentinos

Brussels Jewellery Week

4.28.22 - 5.5.22
Brussels, Belgium

Bringing together established and emerging artists, collectors, and an international public, the European capital hosts its first jewellery week: ten days of exhibitions, awards, conferences, and workshops.

brusselsjewelleryweek.com
@brusselsjewelleryweek

Exhibitions

Master Metalsmith Kim Cridler: Held

10.3.21 - 3.6.22
Metal Museum, Memphis

The 2021 honoree for the Metal Museum's annual Master Metalsmith exhibition series is Kim Cridler. Cridler's studio practice focuses on the fabrication of sculptural forms in metal with materials evocative of the natural world. She says, "My practice is inspired by the patterns of nature and the way objects can record and extend our lives. My work, based on familiar forms like trees and vessels, argues for the pleasure found in beauty and the power of material and form."

metalmuseum.org/master-metalsmith-kim-cridler
@metalmuseum

The Totality of Time Lusters the Dusk: Lauren Fensterstock

1.15.22 - 6.19.22
Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA

In this immersive installation, artist Lauren Fensterstock transforms a gallery within the Chrysler Museum of Art into a darkened and glittering cosmos. Using the labor-intensive technique of mosaic, Fensterstock encrusts her three-dimensional sculptures of a comet and three rain clouds with a mixture of materials, including crystals, black glass, obsidian, onyx, and hematite. These sculptures are suspended from the ceiling, hovering over a lush garden landscape of black cut-paper grass and Plexiglas lakes. The installation invites the viewer into a mysterious world that transcends the earthly and heavenly realms.

chrysler.org/exhibition/the-totality-of-time-lusters-the-dusk
@chryslermuseum

Adriana Gómez
Otredad fagocitada / Phagocytosed Otherness (necklace), 2021
Clay, rayon thread, 925 silver
10 x 35 x 4 cm
Photo: Patricia Zuccarino

Exhibitions, cont.

Sue Amendolara
Help me Say Goodbye, 2019
Sterling silver, holly, printed silk
18 x 12 x 2 in.
Photo: Amanda Rainey

John Dixwell
Ring, Boston, 1705–25
Gold
Courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery
Mabel Brady Garvan Collection

Sorrow/Fullness: A Reflection on Mourning

1.17.22 – 4.1.22
Haas Center for Performing Arts Gallery, Allendale, MI

This exhibition features the work of three metalsmiths: Renée Zettle-Sterling, Sue Amendolara, and Adrienne Grafton. The work offers a wide range of materials and perspectives on the topic of mourning and is a look at how three artists, working in sculpture, jewelry, and wearable art, have dealt with and processed grief.

gvsu.edu/artgallery/sorrowfullness-a-reflection-on-mourning-244.htm
@gvsuart

2022 Craft Biennial

2.19.22 – 6.12.22
Fuller Craft Museum
Brockton, MA

The 2022 Craft Biennial celebrates the diversity of talents in the museum's wide and expansive audience. This biennial exhibition is an important opportunity for young, mid-career, and veteran artists to exhibit their work to the Fuller Craft Museum community. Artists both inside and outside of New England have participated in the past, showcasing stunning works of ceramics, glassware, furniture, textiles, basketry, woodturning, jewelry, and other craft-based media.

fullercraft.org
@fullercraft

Gold in America: Artistry, Memory, Power

2.25.22 – 7.10.22
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT

Gold in America: Artistry, Memory, Power, is the first exhibition since 1963 to survey the role of gold in American art and culture. Organized by John Stuart Gordon, the Benjamin Attmore Hewitt Curator of American Decorative Arts, *Gold in America* showcases over seventy examples of American gold as well as paintings, photographs, and other works of art. Objects are drawn primarily from the Gallery's permanent collection, augmented by select loans from the Yale Center for British Art, the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, and private collections.

artgallery.yale.edu/press-release/gold-america-artistry-memory-power
@yaleartgallery

Renée Zettle-Sterling
Object of Transition: Home #3
Cast of artist's hand in paper pulp, copper, fabric, gold leaf
17 x 9 x 7 in.
Photo: Amanda Rainey

Announcements

Book on American jeweler Laurie Hall published by Arnoldsche

NORTH BY NORTHWEST: The Jewelry of Laurie Hall authored by Susan Cummins and Damien Skinner. For more than four decades, Laurie Hall has been making stories the subject of her work. Her playful and funny jewelry beset with found objects is about the places she lives and the landscapes that fill her imagination, about her family history and different ideas of what it is to be an American. Featuring fifty-eight images of Hall's jewelry spanning the period from 1974 to 2019, this book explores why she is an important maker whose practice deserves to be more widely known.

arnoldsche.com/en/product/north-by-northwest
@arnoldsche_art_publishers

Laurie Hall
Stanley Helps You Do Things Right?!, 1994
Aluminum, plastic, bronze, paint, plexiglass, sterling silver, found Stanley carpenter's pencil
16 x 6 x 2½ in.
Linda Wasserstein collection
Photo: Richard Nichol

SCHMUCK 2022 Postponed

7.6.22 - 7.10.22
Munich, Germany

SCHMUCK 2022, originally slated to take place March 9 to March 13, has been postponed to July 6-10 due to uncertainties caused by the pandemic. Events such as Internationale Handwerksmesse (IHM), Garten München, and Handwerk & Design have also been postponed to the summer.

ihm-handwerk-design.com
@handwerkdesign_muc

Wendy Woldenberg
Dipped Pebble, 2021
Pebble from the Washington coast, 14k Fairmined Gold, seed beads
1 x ½ in, 24 in. necklace
Photo courtesy of the artist

Gallery Opening: Wend Jewelry in Seattle, Washington

Seattle, WA, USA

Wendy Woldenberg opened her jewelry gallery, WEND Jewelry, in November 2021. Woldenburg is a jewelry designer and high school jewelry instructor. Her work is handmade, gender neutral, and made from almost 100% certified recycled or Fairmi ned precious metals and locally sourced, reclaimed, lab-grown, or fully traceable gemstones.

wendjewelry.com
@wendjewelry

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2022 workshops:

Chisel Patterning
Online April 23-24

Metamorphic Mokume
Online June 25-26

Art of Mokume Gane
in-person Sept 20-22
Ah Haa School for the Arts
Telluride, Co

annevillestudio.com
Insta @annevillestudio

Mary Pfister
MetalsmithMary.com

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Kathleen Browne

Jess Tolbert
(Photo Courtesy of Aaron Decker)

Raïssa Bump
(Photo Courtesy of Aaron Decker)

Beth North

Voltage:

THE POWER OF
CONTEMPORARY JEWELRY

SNAG Impact

SNAG is a membership organization committed to fostering an inclusive community that advances the multi-faceted field of metalsmithing and adornment. SNAG inspires creativity and innovation by creating resources and opportunities to help professionals at all levels in the field achieve success.

Mengnan Qu

René Henry

Voltage: The Power of Contemporary Jewelry was a first of its kind: a multifaceted SNAG member exhibition & sale presented in-person, online & in print.

The works in *Voltage* explored the profound impact of pivotal moments in our lives and how they shape the trajectory of an artist's work. Of the 180+ participating SNAG members, 35 were juried into the in-person exhibition at Industry City in Brooklyn during New York City Jewelry Week 2021. The selected works reflected the cultural diversity in SNAG's community and celebrate the range of ways our members are engaged in the broader field.

Photo Courtesy of Jim Bove

Motoko Furuhashi

Casey Newberg

Adam Hawk

Photo Courtesy of Jim Bove

Katja Toporski

$ULO BEE | (Photo Courtesy of Aaron Decker)

Rebecca Strzelec

In-Person Exhibiting Artists

Mary Lucking • Aalia Mujtaba • Raquel Bessudo • Casey Newberg • RhoTang
Kathleen Browne • $ULO BEE • Corey Drew • Lorena Lazard • Ashley Warsaw-Fiorvanti
Jess Bischoff • Caitlin Albritton • Yael Magnes • Beth North • Raïssa Bump • Adam Hawk
Adam Atkinson • Alejandro Arrioja • Yihan Yuan • René Henry • Motoko Furuhashi
Katja Toporski • Mengnan Qu • Lauren Darrouzet • Dongyi Wu • Melissa Scoppa
Mark Ferguson • Mathew Nuqingaq • Rebecca Strzelec • Jess Tolbert • Sabrina Ahmed
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pictured: Stephen Yusko forging in the Hart Moore Blacksmith Studio

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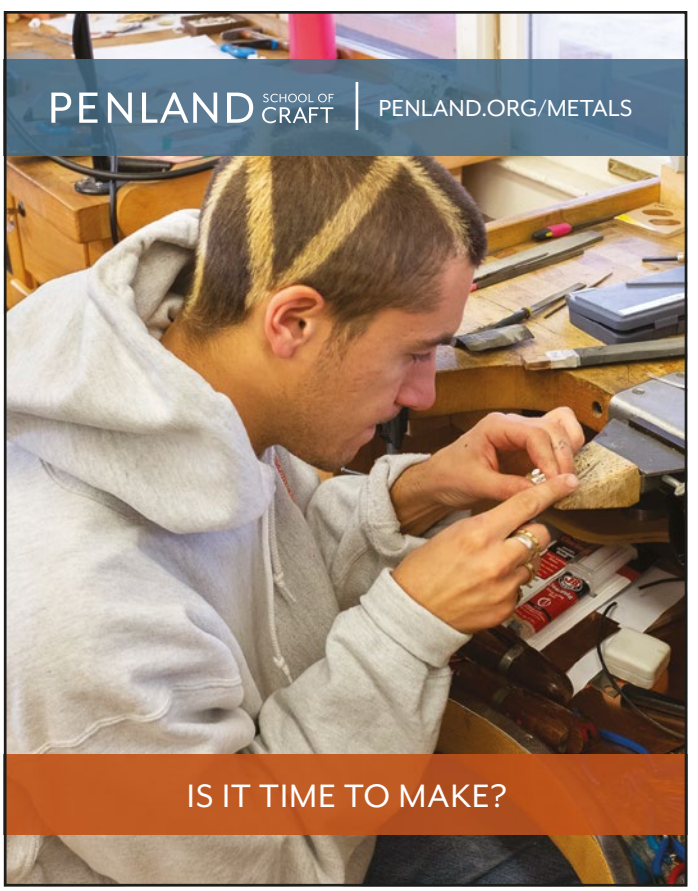

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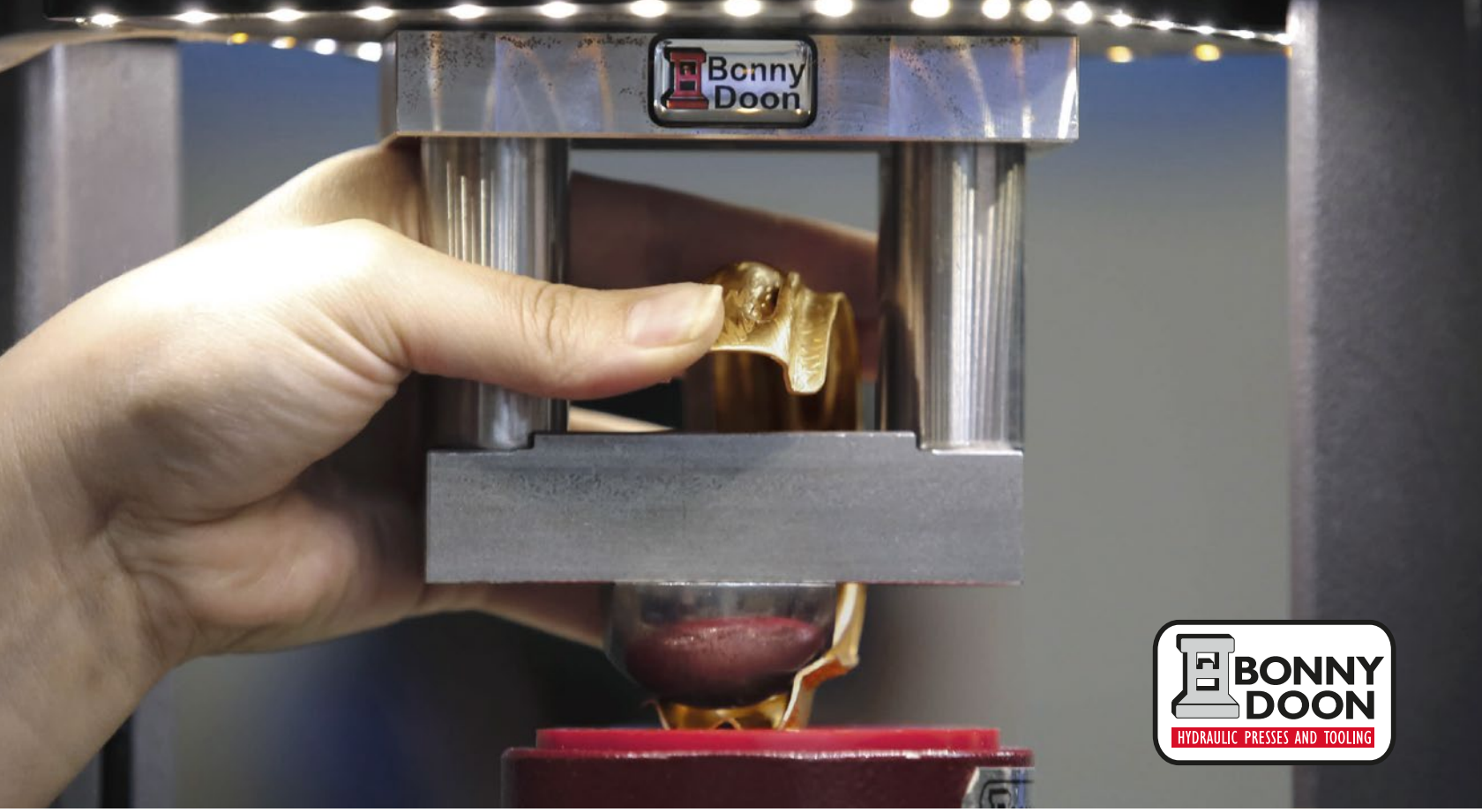

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